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THE WATERFALL.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

Half hid by towering hemlocks tall,
And by the rough rocks rudely piled,
There is a silver waterfall
Deep in the verdant forest wild.

The streamlet slides, with sigh and hiss,
From the green forest still and lone,
And falls into a dark abyss
Where golden sunbeam never shone.

The violet there opes its eyes
When April's sunlight melts the snow,
And brightly blooms, and droops and dies
When May's blue heavens warmer glow.

The wild red rose, the lily pale,
Droop o'er the softly singing stream.
The west wind breathes a tender tale
To birds that in the pine-boughs dream.

The shy thrush sings its sweetest trill
To hail the coming of the day;
And here the "lonely whippoorwill"
Pours forth at eventide its lay.

It is a peaceful, lovely spot,
And I shall ever hold it dear,
For here I twined forget-me-not
Long time ago, in Nora's hair.

And Nora smiled through tender eyes,
And vowed to love me until death;
Her orbs were blue as summer skies,
Her voice as soft as south-wind's breath.

But Nora sleeps beneath the trees,
Here by this sylvan streamlet's side;
And sadly sighs the western breeze
Over my beautiful dead bride.

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS;

OR,

A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

SOLOMON MUDDLE SAW A ROUGH LOOKING MAN STANDING KNIFE IN HAND OVER THE INSENSIBLE FIGURE OF ROBERT HOWARD.

CHAPTER IV.

A MORNING IN JUNE.

The stranger was convalescent. The main source of his weakness had been loss of blood, and as soon as his native strength overcame the depressing effects of this he rapidly recovered. The unremitting care of his hostess had some share in this. She took him under the shadow of her wing with a devoted energy that knew no rest. A real, live patient was apparently a new sensation to her, and an agreeable one, to judge by her devotedness. All her culinary skill was exhausted in preparing dainty morsels to tempt his appetite. She read to him, talked to him, and effectually hindred his time from hanging heavily on his hands. She was as active as a bee, and as jovial as a sunny day, and the whole house and all within it felt the enlivening effects of her unceasing flow of spirits.

They were not long in exchanging confidences. Nellie Brown had no history to relate. Of her parents she had no recollection, they having died in her infancy, leaving her this property. She had spent all her life in this house, and had been brought up by a distant female relative, who still took charge of the establishment, assisted by several negro domestics. Despite the somewhat monotonous character of her life, it had so far been to her a perpetual sunbeam.

The gentleman gave his name as Robert Howard. He was a native of Richmond, Virginia, the son of a lawyer of some note in that city, and had come to North Carolina on business entrusted to him by his father. Why he had been attacked he declared himself unable to explain, though he seemed possessed of certain suspicions too vague to obtain utterance.

About two weeks had elapsed since the period of his being wounded, and he was now seated in a comfortable arm-chair on the front porch of the cottage, enjoying the fresh air with a zest that naturally resulted from his long confinement within the house. It was a splendid day in early June, the summer heat tempered by a deliciously cool breeze that blew upon them from the east. The rose vines that covered the trellis work in front of the porch were a mass of bloom, whose rich odors came in on the wings of the breeze, filling the house with fragrance. The scene in front was highly attractive. At no great distance before the house ran the limpid waters of Lumber river, which by a sudden graceful curve from a long eastward bend, touched the village with a gleaming elbow, and ran off again southwardly. Beyond the stream lay green fields of growing corn and cotton, and the yellow glow of ripening wheat, while the deep green of the pines filled all the horizon.

His fair hostess (for Nellie Brown was pretty as a May morning,) sat near him, enjoying the light of pleasure on the face of the invalid as keenly as he enjoyed the aspect of nature.

"I must confess that I did not expect to find such a beautiful scene here," he said, as he gazed dreamily out upon the landscape. "It is a real Paradise."

"I am so glad you enjoy it," she said, smiling. Fortunately you have found us at our best. In winter it is dull and prosy enough, but now life is a perpetual delight. Where is a finer picture in your art galleries than you have before you?"

"Fine, indeed! I would be glad to take a memento of it back with me."

"How?"

"I have some trifling skill with the pencil, and would like to amuse myself by sketching your landscape to the extent of my poor ability."

"Oh, will you?" And she sprang to her feet and clapped her hands with a child's delight. "How I should love to see it! And you'll stay here till you have finished it—now won't you? You can paint it right from the porch here. That will be splendid!"

"But, Miss Brown, painting is beyond my ability. I can simply promise you a plain sketch, and I cannot impose on your hospitality by lengthening my stay. Is there not an inn in the village, where I can obtain accommodations for a short period? I have already been too much of a burden to you."

"A burden! oh!" reproachfully cried his hostess. "If you go away till you are well I will never forgive you. As for inns, there is but one that is respectable in the district, and that is five miles away on the other side of the horrible wood of which I fancy you have had enough."

"I remember the place; and I don't fear any further trouble in the wood."

"Now not another word. You are my patient, and I won't have any disobedience. You shall stay here and draw my landscape, my dear, sweet, charming little landscape. There, don't open your lips! Your are going to say something disagreeable, I know, and I won't hear it."

"But, Miss Brown—"

"Not a word, till you can be reasonable;" and the wilful little beauty ran into the house, flinging back a merry laugh as she disappeared.

He sat smiling, and inwardly cogitating as to his best course of action.

"She is as innocent of the world as a child," he said to himself; "but the village people will talk, and will give her but little credit for her innocence. I cannot stay here much longer, that is settled. Yet how am I to break loose? Ah, I have it! there is the housekeeper, or aunt, or whatever she is. I will enlist her, and let her settle with my self-willed little nurse. What a pity such a charming being as she is should be buried so far out of sight of the world. I must confess to myself, if I can't to her, that her face and cunning little ways are the landscape that is most attractive to my eyes, for somehow the girl has got a hold on my fancy. She is so free from all conventionality, so naive and charming—. There, there, if I keep on so I will be convincing myself that my gratitude for her care is growing too warm. I must leave this region as soon as possible; but must first execute my mission to the best of my ability. Perhaps I can make this drawing serve me awhile as an excuse for remaining in the neighborhood. What a kind-hearted, chatty, delightful little witch she is. A year of her society would make a very Romeo of me, and she my Juliet."

So he debated with himself, unknowing that love had taken root already in his heart—the little germ as yet, "no larger than a mustard seed"—but which is often of such rapid growth that the flowering follows the planting with scarce an interval.

"There now, I have given you plenty of time to make up your mind, and you have decided to be sensible and to stay where you are, and to make my picture for me, and to be a good creature generally. So you need not say anything more about it. I accept the sacrifice with gratitude. You shall stay, since you have made up your mind to do so. Hush, now! the case is settled. And here comes my wise old Solomon, who hasn't been near me for a week, and who is the best, kindest, simplest and bravest of human beings. You must like him, Mr. Howard, for he is an especial favorite of mine, though I do tease him sometimes." She ran rapidly to the garden gate, shook hands with our friend with an impressement that filled his homely face with smiles, and led him up to the invalid.

"Mr. Howard, let me present you to Mr. Muddle, a gentleman to whom we all owe thanks, yet who has been keeping away, as if afraid of receiving the thanks which are his due."

"I am very happy to meet Mr. Muddle, to whom I owe far more than thanks—and hope yet to be able to repay in deeds, what I cannot find words to express."

"There, say nothing about it," replied Solomon, shaking the extended hand of the other with evident pleasure. "I saved your life because I couldn't help it, and don't want no thanks for what was just nature. There was that chap that shot you standing plum afore me, and I'd a rifle to my shoulder. I hadn't nothing more to do with it. It was instinct, I reckon, took my finger to the trigger, and my eye to the sights—and afore I know'd what 'd happened, it was all done."

"Then I must thank your instinct for its readiness—and particularly, for its good aim. I am told that you pursued the robbers to their haunt, and had a brush with them."

"Well, yes, we went to see them, and found them at home; though they didn't wait to welcome us. We found the chap that shot you, in his last sickness."

"But you haven't told us all of it," cried Nellie. "The robbers returned and fired on you. That is the last I heard from you of the story—and you have left the rest 'to be continued' in my mind for a week."

"They launched a boat and made after us—but we had too much start, and I reckon our boat was better. Anyhow, we left them behind and got safely out. Joe Bradly got his team back, and that's about all we got for our trip."

The conversation continued in a desultory manner for an hour or two longer, the lady devoting her attention now to the one, now to the other, with all the versatility of a coquette, until more than one pang of jealousy had crossed Solomon's mind—and as he left, after having been sorely teased by his fun-loving hostess, he muttered crossly to himself—"Just my luck. Here I've brought her this Howard, and by the looks of his eyes, he's half in love with her. If she falls t'other half in love with him now, what's to be left for me? I know the girl is ahead of me in eddication, and beauty, and all that sort of thing. But there's something in honesty, and industry, and a sound heart. A good farm, too, is worth thinking about; and I ain't half as ignorant as most of the folks about. I'm going to try how well she likes me, some day, that's all. I've known and loved her since she was a child, and when I was only a boy myself, and I think I've a right to speak out."

"You don't know what a noble heart he has, Mr. Howard," said Nellie. "A little of the rough diamond, I confess; but he was the playmate of my childhood, and has been the best friend of my years of discretion—or indiscretion, if that expresses it better. You must like him. He is very homely, true, and simple-minded in some particulars; but in practical affairs, there is no man more shrewd."

"Or quicker on the trigger. That I have sound reason to know. Your friend Solomon shall be my friend Solomon; both that he has proved a friend in need, and because you ask it—and I owe you enough to grant any request from you."

He bent forward and looked in her eyes with a softness and an undefined meaning in his glance that made her suddenly turn away, a faint red tinge suffusing her cheek. It was one of those unspoken sentences that hold the meaning of a volume.

CHAPTER V.

CONVALESCENCE.

That morning Mr. Howard had received a letter from Virginia, in answer to one he had written several days before, to the following effect:

"RICHMOND, June 5th, 1767.

"*My Dear Son:*—Yours of the 1st inst. is at hand, and I am glad to find that you are so rapidly recovering from the murderous attempt on your life. This circumstance has confirmed what was before but a vague suspicion with me, and I am convinced that we have discovered the proper locality, for it is very evident that the villains were not common highwaymen. Had I for a moment imagined that your life was endangered, I should certainly not have let you gone. You have behaved nobly, my dear son, and I do not think they will be so daring as to molest you again, or I would insist on your returning home. You must, however, be exceedingly cautious in all your movements. Move only by broad daylight and always in company, and never permit yourself to be caught unarmed. I would much prefer to have you return home, and to take your place myself, though I know it would be useless to propose it. I have, besides, full confidence in your judgment and courage. What you tell me of the appearance of the country does not appeal to my memory. Only that business will not permit, I would make a flying visit to Burton, and have no doubt that I should be able to recognize the position of the farm, although, as I have told you, I only saw it once, and then simply by a momentary glance while riding through that section of country.

"You may, as you propose, send me a sketch of the domicile and surroundings in which you are involuntarily located. Possibly it may recall something to my memory. I feel certain that the solution of the mystery, if it has any solution, lies in the district in which you now are. The attack on your life seems to prove this, and to prove further that there is something which certain parties desire to keep concealed, if even they have to resort to murder to accomplish their purpose.

"I have long vaguely feared that there has been a great wrong done, and of this I am now convinced. True it is a difficult matter to dig up secrets that are buried twenty years deep in time, but it may not prove impossible, and if possible it shall be accomplished. Be circumspect and prudent, my son. Let no one suspect your object. Be as long as you choose in recovering from the effects of your wound, as it will give you sufficient excuse for prolonging your stay in that neighborhood. Be careful to destroy my letters, as they might fall into the wrong hands and reveal our purpose. Be sure and let me hear from you soon.

"Your affectionate father,

"JOHN HOWARD."

Several days elapsed before Mr. Howard felt able to undertake the task thus given him by his father, and to perform which he had obtained the glad consent of his hostess.

His trunk had arrived by a slower conveyance shortly after his own advent at Burton, and in this he had all the necessary materials for the accomplishment of his purpose.

At length came a day in which he felt such a renewal of health, and so great a distaste for the enforced idleness of the past few weeks, that he produced his drawing utensils, and with the aid of a little negro boy, whom his hostess lent him as a sort of bodyguard, he fitted up an impromtu easel, and commenced at his leisure to sketch the main features of the landscape.

He was much too feeble to make any rapid progress with this work, proceeding in fact with a deliberation that set his little assistant on nettles, as he watched with staring eyes the incomprehensible plexus of lines which formed the embryo of the picture.

This aid-de-camp of the artist was of so intense a hue of African blackness, that the sunlight seemed to be suddenly overshadowed when he turned his face towards it. He was about thirteen years of age, full of life and capers as a monkey, with an expression of drollery and boyish innocence that rendered his face perfectly ludicrous. He went by the name of Pete, and though, as his mistress said, he had an occasional desire to behave himself, it had to contend against a dense stratum of original mischief. In his antics he once sent the materials of the artist rolling over the porch in a most inartistic array.

"Come here, sir," said Miss Brown.

She motioned to the negro, whose grinning face suddenly relapsed into intense demureness, and he slowly obeyed her summons, as if dragging himself against his will to the spot.

"Pete, what does this mean?"

"Couldn't help 't, Miss Nell. 'Scuse me dis once, an' I'll pick 'em all up, an' I'll be jist as good as—as beans. I will, Miss Nell, shure. Pete's goin' to turn ober a new leaf."

"I fear, Mr. Howard," said his hostess, as Pete went diligently to work to repair his mischief, "I fear you will not admire the contents of some of his new leaves. He has been turning them over all his life, but the next leaf usually reads even worse than the preceding."

"I have no doubt we shall get along very well together. So far, I have found his antics amusing. And if he goes too far, I will hand him over to your tender mercies. Eh, Pete!"

The boy looked up with a grin that showed how little he valued the threat.

"Why, it begins already to look like the place," she said, replacing the overturned drawing. "I would give much to have your skill with the pencil."

"I have not much to boast of, I assure you; and I will not ask you to accept this rude sketch; I can improve on it on a second attempt."

"But I cannot permit you to go to so much trouble; particularly in your weak condition."

"Why, as I have nothing else to do, you will surely let me do it as recreation."

"Oh, if you put it in that sense, I am vanquished."

"In any sense, Miss Brown, it would delight me to serve you to the utmost extent of my ability. After your kind devotion to me, a wounded stranger thrown into your care, I would certainly be ungrateful to refuse you any request, however severely it might tax me. And, without any consideration of charity or gratitude, I should be happy to serve you, at any time and in any way."

The compliment implied in his words was so warmly interpreted in the glowing expression of his face, that the lady turned away to hide the sudden blush that flamed upon her cheeks.

"Now, Mr. Howard, I must sternly forbid compliments," she said, as if determined not to take the sense of his words so plainly expressed in his looks. "You are my patient still, and it will not do to permit you to indulge in such language."

She turned towards the river that ran shimmering past.

"Are you fond of the water, Mr. Howard? If you are, we have yonder an excellent sail boat, and as soon as you are strong enough an occasional excursion will do you good."

"Particularly if I am to have the pleasure of your company."

"Oh, that is part of the stipulation. I am a passionate water-woman, sailoress, or whatever is the proper feminine appellation, and only shall be too happy to act as your naiad. A boat naiad that is."

"Precisely. I don't think I could emulate the knights who paid their devotions to the under water divinities."

The sketch, but little more than an outline of the salient features of the scene, yet drawn with such skill that it already gave a very clear idea of the character of the landscape, was folded up, and formed part of the contents of a letter posted the next evening at the village office.

During these days of rare summer weather his health and strength were rapidly returning, and he was already able to walk as far as the village, with a long interval of rest before the returning.

About the time of the finishing of the second sketch, he received the expected answer to his letter. The most interesting portion of it ran as follows:

"I have been closely studying your drawing, placing it in all lights, and coming on it at unexpected moments, so as if possible to take it unawares, and fit it by hook or crook into my memory. But beyond a certain vague, very vague hint of something familiar in its outlines, it has so far escaped my recognition, yet despite this I have a sort of intuitive belief that you have hit upon the very spot, and that only a weak spot in my memory hinders me from at once perceiving it.

"The names of the parties with whom you are staying, and what you have learned of their history, do not at all conform to the facts of which I am in search. Yet I wish to study this matter somewhat longer before putting you to any further trouble, as I cannot drive from my mind the intrusive idea that you have struck the very spot. I would like you to acquaint yourself, so far as you can, without causing suspicion, with the character and history of all persons in the neighborhood. If the solution of the mystery lies, as I am sure it does, in that district, there should be no great difficulty in discovering the facts necessary to place us in possession of the clue; unless, indeed, it has been designedly hidden with such caution as to lie beyond the reach of discovery."

Mr. Howard proceeded to obey the desires of his father, so far as he was able consistent with due caution, leading his conversations with Solomon, the doctor, and others of the villagers, and even with his hostess, into such a train, that ere long, he had a very good general idea of the family connections and genealogy of the neighborhood. But so far as concerned his especial object, he remained as much in the dark as ever.

His recovery now was rapid. He was soon able to bear those sails upon the river to which his hostess had invited him, and with her for sole comrade, spent many happy afternoons, drifting between the green river banks, drifting over the placid, sunlit surface, drifting under blue summer skies, ah, faster still, drifting, drifting into the magical kingdom of love.

CHAPTER VI

MR. HOWARD MAKES A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

According to his determination, Mr. Howard one day had his trunk removed to the Sorrel Horse Inn, and took up his abode henceforth on the other side of the wood, where he had so narrowly escaped being assassinated.

Bradly, the innkeeper, expressed himself highly gratified to see him, and would do his utmost to render his stay comfortable. He had but one other permanent boarder, a young man who had been with him for a few days only, a genteel, companionable personage, with whom he knew his new guest could not avoid being pleased.

Mr. Howard was disposed to agree with his landlord, on making the acquaintance of his fellow guest, and to vote him also a genteel, companionable personage. He had given his name as Simon Du Bar, a resident of Charleston, and had declared his intention of staying for some weeks in the neighborhood, with the purpose of shooting, fishing, and general recuperation.

"I cannot conceive, however," he remarked to Mr. Howard, "what brings you, a resident of Richmond, so far down towards here at this season of the year. Were I in your place I would be making for the mountains, or some seaside resort."

"For the same general purpose, recuperation," remarked the other, concealing his real motive. "We have a tradition in Virginia that the air of the turpentine districts is good for troubles in the lungs, and as I had some difficulty in the winter from a cough, I was advised to try the effect of the atmospheric extract of pine."

"Put not your faith in traditions. I have known this state for years, and take my word for it you will not get a mite of good if you spend a year breathing the turpentine odor. There are places of proved virtue for your complaint; then why act on the faith of a tradition?"

"Oh, I had another errand in this region, and so thought to kill two birds with one stone. As my time is not precious just now I will give it two or three weeks further trial at least. It will certainly do no harm, even if no good results."

The other looked at him strangely as he spoke, with a shade of disapprobation on his face that seemed to show some peculiar interest in his new friend's welfare.

He was in person tall and rather stout, of light complexion, a thin, sandy moustache shading his well-formed mouth. His eyes were of a grayish hue, and very keen in their glance, a result possibly of his experience as a sportsman. There was something in their expression, some trick of movement, that seemed momentarily familiar to Mr. Howard, though he was speedily forced to dismiss the idea as pure fancy, for the familiar appearance vanished almost as soon as it had arisen.

"Well, since you have decided to stay here," he said, "you must let me, an old hand in the woods, prescribe for you. Take all the fresh air you can get. Fish, hunt, exercise as much as possible. In short, join company with me. You appear to be a good, social fellow. I try to be the same. Let us seek health in company."

"And where do you propose to obtain so much sport? I must confess I have not seen any great promise here yet."

"I can show you plenty. Off yonder, towards the swamps, is the region I intend to try."

"I am told that is a dangerous locality, that the Budd gang of outlaws—"

"Oh I have heard of them," he interrupted, "and think the whole gang a great bugbear of these benighted heathens. I have been through and through their swamp and never saw trace of an outlaw."

"I am ready to join you then, so far as my strength will permit, though my wound will prevent me for some time yet from making any exhausting excursions. I am still quite weak from its effects."

"Your wound? I was not aware that you had been wounded."

Mr. Howard replied by giving him a short history of the occurrence, which seemed to deeply interest him, and he expressed great indignation at what he considered a cowardly attempt to assassinate a traveller.

"And this Miss Brown, into whose tender mercies you were thrown. What is she? A maiden lady of fifty, froward and forlorn, fit to frighten sickness out of a man by the sour aspect of her face?"

"Quite the contrary. She is a young lady of twenty, to whose kind attention I owe that I am so soon recovered."

"Then you shall certainly introduce me to her, that I may thank her for providing me with a companion in my forays on the fish and fowl of this benighted country. In the meantime," he continued, choking any attempt at an answer which the other might have been disposed to make, "it is too fine a morning to sit here vegetating. Get your hat and let us stretch our limbs a bit, and get the bearings of the country."

Du Bar seemed determined to make the most of his new acquaintance. For two or three days the latter was hindered from paying his intended visit to Miss Brown, as he could not well do so without determinedly shaking off the other. Besides, Du Bar had proved himself so agreeable and gentlemanly, that Howard felt less hesitancy in regard to giving him the desired introduction.

On the third morning, finding no escape from his new friend, he invited Du Bar to accompany him in a ride to Burton.

Leaving their carriage in the village, they took their way for a stroll along the river bank, Howard secretly disinclined to invite a stranger to Miss Brown's house, yet hardly knowing how to avoid it.

A short distance further brought them in front of a negro hut, which stood on the brink of the river. Pete was there frisking about in the grass, while before the hut stood a white-haired African, leaning upon the hoe with which he had just been working in his garden.

Howard stopped to salute him, having made his acquaintance in previous walks.

"Hope Mass Howard am gettin' well again?" he asked.

"Yes, Joe, but hardly as strong as you yet, if I am twenty-five to your seventy. Have you spent all your life on this estate?"

"Yes, Mass, eber since I was de size ob dat little Pete dar. I belonged to ole Mass Johnson, years afore Missy Nellie's farder come."

"Come! why I thought he always lived here?"

"Now, Howard, I hope you are not going to spend the day listening to that old fellow's reminiscences? I would not give a fig for the truth you will get out of twenty of these rambling old slaves, and I know them well. Come on, and leave the man to his hoeing," he spoke petulantly, and turned on his heel as if to go.

"I tinks as I can tell de trufe yet," replied the old negro, "an de shadow ob a lie habn't passed my lips dese forty year."

"And you say that Mr. Brown was not a native here?"

"He jest come'd here to die, dat's all. De little gal was den a picaninny only jest born, and sue neber knowed her farder. Sue neber knowed farder nor mudder, more den Missy Wilton, an dat's de Lor's truth."

As this conversation continued, Du Bar stood listening with more than disapprobation with an expression in which anger and dismay seemed mingled.

These seemingly unaccountable emotions displayed on the man's face attracted the attention of little Pete, who seemed to have taken a dislike to him at first sight. Crouched low in the grass he watched keenly every movement of his face.

"Where did he come from?"

"I dunno—but tink I heered dat it war from Illinoy."

The look deepened on Du Bar's face, from spleen to malignity. And his observer lay watching him, as a hawk watches its quarry.

As if suddenly conscious of the feeling that was exhibited on his face he smoothed his features, and addressed the old negro.

"There, uncle, as you have now unloaded your budget of news—which has about as much interest to us as would the history of Cock Robin, maybe you will be satisfied to go on with your hoeing, and let us finish our walk."

"Good day, Joe. And many happy days to you," said Howard.

"Oh, dat's mebbe good enough for little nigs like Pete. But it's not much account to ole Joe."

A smile that betokened a long life of contentment, marked the old negro's face as he shouldered his hoe, and walked back to his garden.

"I see that you don't know much about that class of old negroes, or you would not trouble yourself to listen to their vaporings," said Du Bar, as they walked on. "The chances are that what he has told you may be but the wanderings of a childish brain. I never saw a respectable memory among them yet."

"You may be right," replied Howard, carelessly. "At all events, it matters very little whether what he has said in this case be true or not, for all there is interesting to us in it."

Du Bar cast a keen, quick glance at the speaker, as though he would look into his brain and see what thoughts lay there behind his words.

At this moment they perceived Miss Brown approaching. She had been screened in her approach by some trees that rose beside the path, so that their meeting was a surprise. This settled the doubt in Mr. Howard's mind. He could not avoid giving Du Bar the introduction he had requested.

CHAPTER VII.

A SHARP BARGAIN.

Miss Nellie met her delinquent patient with a degree of coolness, the result probably of pique at his hasty departure and long absence. Her acknowledgment of the introduction of Du Bar was as little cordial as politeness would permit. After a moment, however, she seemed actuated by the idea of punishing Howard, by devoting herself to this new acquaintance, and entered into an animated, though somewhat nervously sustained conversation with Du Bar, so managed that Howard had no chance to break into their circle of talk.

Smiling to himself in a manner that showed his correct appreciation of her object, he strode beside them in their return to the house, humming a tune, and leaving them to the enjoyment of their conversation.

Leaving them to enter the porch, he continued his walk round the corner of the house, where he had observed Pete, who, in strange contrast to his usual manner, was walking demurely along, rubbing his woolly poll as if the friction were intended to help him in the evolvement of an idea.

Seeing Mr. Howard he instantly ran up to him, and addressed him in low, cautious tones, as if weighty with some momentous secret.

"Mass Howard, who am dat man?"

"A friend of mine, Pete."

"No frien' of yourn, dat I's sure on. Pete hab him eyes open."

"What makes you think so, you foolish little rascal?"

"By golly, it's true! I seed him when you war talkin' to ole Joe, an' he hated you den. I cotched a good look mind, Mass Howard, and him face war black as de debil, an' him eyes jest like de rattlesnake."

"Now, Pete, I don't want any of this nonsense. You had better drive it all out of your head."

"Dere am no nonsense in't. Neber nin'. Pete 'll watch him, an' if dere am anyting—but dere's no use talkin.'" And Pete strode away with a comical affort at dignity.

Mr. Howard returned to the porch, rather disquieted, despite himself, by the character of the boy's communication.

But a glance at Du Bar's frank expression of countenance, as he sat absorbed in an earnest conversation with Nellie, reassured him, and he felt a sense of amusement at the unusual earnestness of the little negro.

The anger of the lady had apparently all been blown away by the wind of their discourse, for she greeted him in a manner that showed she was ashamed of her previous coolness, and took pains to make him a sharer in the subject of their conversation.

While the three sat thus earnestly engaged, Du Bar alone facing the house door, Miss Wilton (Nellie's aunt, to whom we have already alluded,) appeared on the threshold. As her eyes fell upon his face she turned pale and staggered back a step, leaning for support against the doorway. He gazed at her with perfect lack of recognition in his face, and with no apparent surprise at her emotion. The sole evidence that he saw her was a peculiar movement of his hand, as if intended for a signal. She instantly turned and disappeared in the house, her momentary presence unseen by any but Du Bar.

The day was fine, the stream inviting in the placid dignity of its flow, and their conversation ended in a proposal from Mr. Howard for a boat-ride upon the river. This proposition was readily accepted by the lady, but Du Bar declared that he had no enjoyment upon the water, and preferred to remain where he was, or to occupy himself otherwise. At the same time he so strongly urged them not to let his presence interfere with their pleasure, declaring that his time would by no means hang heavy on his hands, that they at length consented, and left him half hidden behind the smoke of a cigar, and quite lost in the pages of a book.

They had hardly gone before Miss Wilton again appeared upon the porch, advancing with a certain caution of movement that seemed uncalled for.

He remained so deeply interested in his reading, as to appear unconscious of her presence.

She stood irresolutely before him for a minute, apparently at a loss how best to break the silence.

"This is unexpected," she at length remarked. "Why have you ventured here in person?"

"Ah, my dear Miss Wilton! Forgive my not noticing you sooner. I must confess surprise at your question, as the subject of a late communication from you was one that could not well be settled by letter. As it is years since I have had the pleasure of seeing you at home, I thought it would be no more than courtesy for me to take a run down here, and have a social chat on matters pecuniary. Besides, this fellow, Howard—do you know who he is?"

"No."

"Well, he is one of my principal objects in visiting Burton. But to the main question. On what plea do you base your exorbitant demand?"

"I cannot perceive that it is exorbitant. What are the paltry sums I have had from you? The wealth you possess belongs to you to a great extent upon my sufferance. In a day's time I could shake the foundations upon which your fortune stands. I consider myself then virtually a part owner of this property, as its possession depends as much upon me as upon yourself, and I demand an equivalent more nearly approaching my value."

"Your value does not equal that," he replied, contemptuously snapping his fingers. "You have proof of nothing and can reveal nothing injurious. I have paid you for services, not for a secret. You have no secret in fact there is no secret."

"My dear John, there is a secret; I have the secret. I have the necessary documents to prove the secret. These documents are worth to you half your fortune. I have fixed their value to me at ten thousand dollars. A moderate sum, considering the intrinsic value; but my desires are moderate."

Du Bar dropped his cigar as if it had burnt him. This, however, was the only evidence of emotion he displayed, save that a hard, malignant expression came into his face as she proceeded.

"What are these papers?" he replied. "There never have been any papers in existence that I have reason to fear."

"You are slightly mistaken in that particular," she answered. "When your worthy father entrusted me with a certain mission, he gave me to understand that there was no occasion to preserve certain documents. I did not quite agree with him, and so preserved them. Good actions, you see, never fail of their reward. These papers are now worth to me ten thousand dollars."

"So you have been playing the traitor doubly."

"And why not? I consider this last offence a crime that leans to virtue's side. There is no great fault committed in deceiving you."

"Let me see these documents."

"Let me see their price. They shall certainly not leave my hands until they have produced their equivalent."

"What are they?"

"Ah, now you are more reasonable. Well, I have no objection to satisfying you. They consist of a certain marriage certificate of considerable value. There are besides, the record of a birth, and several interesting letters, which, taken together, tell a very peculiar story."

"I will take nothing of the kind on your word. I must see for myself."

"Very well. She rose from her seat, and went into the house.

"The she-hound has been playing double all through," he muttered, his face contorted with a sudden fury of passion. "I'll be even with her for this! She don't know me yet. I'll waken her out of her pleasant dreams of money-making."

Miss Wilton reappeared with a small ebony casket, which she proceeded to open, drawfrom it successively several papers, yellow with age, which she cautiously displayed before his eyes, retaining them in her own hands.

"Are you convinced now?" she asked, returning them to the casket, and carefully locking it.

"Convinced? Oh yes. And you imagine that those bits of faded paper are worth ten thousand dollars to me?"

"I imagine that you had better seriously consider it. And without delay, if you please; I know a market in which they may bring more than that."

"You would not dare offer them there. It would not be safe for you to venture within reach of the law. You have played traitor throughout."

"I don't think we have much room for recrimination in that respect. You are not even now so thoroughly honest. Who is Simon Du Bar?"

"A very reputable gentleman. You don't know the danger we run through that Howard. Simon thinks it his mission to counteract him. And will do it, by—. But that's no matter of interest to you. I will manage it myself."

"And who is Howard, that he seems to be such a lion in the way? Is he anything to John Howard, the Richmond lawyer?"

"His son. And down here after no good, that I know. He is as close-mouthed though as an oyster, at the mere hint of business. I heard him pumping the old nigger down there, not two hours ago."

"Ah! Does this explain the attack on him when he first arrived here? There was always a mystery about that, which you are helping to clear up."

"I know nothing about it."

"No matter, I am not interested in him. I mistrusted something wrong, and managed to get him out of this house. But just now my own business is more interesting."

"I tell you your demands are beyond reason, and I cannot consider them."

"Very well. There are others who will."

"Or, at least, I cannot come to a conclusion to day."

"That is another aspect of the case. You can take plenty of time, as I am in no sort of hurry—I don't object to your taking a week to consider."

"Generous with your time, indeed! And now suppose we change the subject. Some of our ideas may possibly slip into the wrong ears."

"No danger from the house. There is no one nearer than the kitchen. And you see there is not a soul in front, except our friends on the river."

"If we were in the heart of Sahara, it would be best to have as few words as possible on so dangerous a subject."

She appeared to think his prudence rather fine drawn, for they had conversed throughout in low, cautious tones, while, to all appearance, they might have talked loudly without danger of being overheard.

But appearances are proverbially deceitful. Shortly afterward the boat touched shore. Miss Wilton vanished into the house, and Du Bar strolled towards the river to meet the returning pair. He had hardly left the porch, before a woolly head broke the clustering leaves at the base of the porch. It was followed by a face of midnight blackness, whose eyes rolled with an utterly indescribable expression. The next moment emerged the pigmy form of Pete from his screen of leaves.

His evolutions were curious to behold. He tossed up his arms and opened his mouth in a sort of noiseless view halloo. He turned such a succession of somersaults as would inevitably have caused vertigo to a looker on. He strode round the lawn on his hands, ignoring the mission of his feet. He ran up the trees nimbly as a squirrel. These evolutions ended in a violent peal of laughter, mirth so uproarious that he rolled on the ground in the excess of his enjoyment.

"Nice coons dem, but Pete's on dere track. Dere a little hifalutin' in dere talk, but I cotched a ting here and a ting dare, an' I knows dat Simon's tother names John."

The idea was so ludicrous that it renewed his mirth in its full force. This exhibition without an audience, only concluded on the near approach of his mistress and the two gentlemen, when Pete shot like a flash round the corner of the house, and was lost to sight.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE SWAMP.

The next week or two were passed by the new made friends to a great extent in hunting and fishing, and in rides around the country. Howard's momentary distrust of Du Bar had quite vanished, and he voted him to himself as one of the best of good fellows. He found time for frequent visits to Nellie, and their favorite enjoyment of a sail or a row upon the river was usually indulged in. Du Bar too was an occasional visitor at the cottage and succeeded by his fine conversational powers and courteous manners in strongly ingratiating himself in Nellie's favor.

Solomon Muddle, however, conceived an opinion of the stranger less rose-colored than that held by Nellie and Howard, but jealousy evidently warped his judgment in this particular.

Du Bar had been for some time striving to induce Howard to accompany him on a shooting excursion into the interior of the swamp. He assured him that they would there find game worthy the metal of two such Nimrods as themselves, small game in profusion, and probably bear. He laughed at all dread of the outlaws, said he had hunted in the swamp several times himself without seeing the shadow of an outlaw.

"I was in it once," said Solomon, who came upon them during one of their talks upon this subject, "and not deep at that, and I seen in two minutes more of the screeching outlawed hounds than I'll forget in two years."

"Well, put my experience against yours, and the chances are strongly in favor of our not meeting them. And if we do, what would it matter? Money is these fellows' game. If we carry only buckshot instead, and offer it to them at the muzzle of a gun, they will probably give us a wide berth."

"It's little them deer will care for your buckshot, as you'll maybe find."

"I hope, Howard, that you are not going to let this bugbear of a gang of outlaws overcome your good intentions."

"I don't fear them a jot. And to prove it, I will go with you on this excursion, and principally with the hope that we may meet with some of them. I have not forgotten their warm welcome of me. I am rather weak yet, from my wound, but am good for eight or ten miles afoot."

"Spoken like a brave knight. And tomorrow shall be the day, if it suits you, and all is serene."

"I'll join you, if there's no objection," said Solomon. "It's long since I drawed a head on any sizeable creature; and we may stir up some big game. And if there's any danger, you'll find that my rifle counts one."

Du Bar seemed strangely vexed at this proposal of Solomon's. He evidently did not want his company, yet knew no decent pretext to avoid it. He raised such objections as lay at all within the limits of politeness, but they were quietly ignored by Solomon's cool judgment in practical affairs, and the conversation ended in his being admitted as a full member of the hunting party; a result far more to Du Bar's disapprobation than he thought it expedient to show.

The next day proving fine, and cool enough to greatly modify the growing warmth of the season, our friends drove to the edge of the swamp, landing at the negro huts, near which the outlaws had embarked on a former occasion.

The swamp in general was known to be so charged with moisture at this season of the year, and the passage so difficult from the matted character of the vegetation, that it was only on Du Bar's assurance that he could lead them to a comparatively firm and dry portion of the swamp, that they had undertaken the expedition. He declared that it had also been swept by fire the preceding year, and was therefore nearly clear of underbrush. Hiring a boat from the negroes, they rowed boldly down the creek, soon leaving the turpentine clearing out of sight, and crossing the limits of civilization.

They rowed for about two miles into the swamp, following the main stream the most of this distance, then diverging into a branch that led them, after a short row, into a pond of considerable dimensions. This was about a quarter of a mile across, the water clear and shallow, the bottom being visible at no great depth. Around its borders rose a dense growth of timber, huge cypresses and oaks lifting their mighty trunks above their less vigorous neighbors, the maple, beech, juniper and holly. Here and there a magnolia, all snowy now with bloom, broke the monotonous array of green, while the air was heavy with its rich fragrance. Vines and creeping plants in the utmost profusion interlaced the trees. The pearly gray tylandria hung in long festoons, like a fringe of tangled hair, veiling the dark green of the cedar and holly. Mistletoe, in vivid green tufts, grew on the branches of the oldest trees. Beneath grew a dense undergrowth of evergreen shrubs, so thick as to forbid passage.

Passing this pond they entered a slender continuation of the stream on the other side. After following this for a short distance, they landed on a piece of firm ground that rose beside the stream. Leaving their boat here hidden under the bushes, they took their arms and prepared for a progress on foot deeper into the inhospitable region.

The spot they stood on was a small clearing, thickly overgrown with tall grasses. On every side around rose the dense belt of timber, apparently forbidding egress by its undergrowth.

"I was here three years ago," said Du Bar, who now assumed leadership of the expedition. "There is a narrow path leads out yonder, and the woods are more open beyond. Look well to your pieces, for we may come upon game at any moment."

"And may be made game at any minute, if we stir up the Budds," muttered Solomon crossly, carefully capping his rifle.

The path, a narrow track that had probably been formed by the passage of animals, led in about a hundred feet to more open ground. It was treacherous soil they now stood upon, spongy and moist, sinking beneath their feet and water oozing out if they stood for a minute. Only the thickly matted roots of many generations of fibrous grasses seemed to give it coherence and render it at all passable.

Still it was, as Du Bar had promised, dry and firm compared with the general surface of the swamp, and remarkably clear of undergrowth, probably in consequence of the fire he had mentioned.

The warm June sun shone fiercely above, pouring its rays upon the matted arbor of leaves above their heads, through which only flecks of sunlight found their way to the soil beneath. The atmosphere was damp and close, scarce a breath of air moving beneath the trees.

The forest seemed the abode of myriads of birds, of a great variety of species. Flocks of larks, quails, and robins were frequent, while the loud hammering of the red-headed woodpecker could be heard on all sides. For some time no larger game appeared. Suddenly Du Bar's gun cracked short and sharp on the still morning air. They had brought with them a trained hunting dog, the property of Solomon, which had thus far closely accompanied its master. It now sprang forward, and in a minute's time was seen by the three hunters bringing in a large bird, which on nearer approach proved to be a wild turkey of magnificent size.

"Well done for you, Du Bar. It is my turn next," said Howard, pointing up a cypress tree in front, on a high limb of which was just visible a narrow line of fur. Directing them to keep a watch upon the point, he moved round to the other side of the tree, and after a few minutes effort to get a good point of view suddenly raised his gun and fired. The shot was immediately followed by the fall of what seemed a large round ball, covered with grayish fur.

"Well, that's a good show," said Solomon. "Turkey for one, coon for 'tother. I'll not put up with less than a bear." He called off his dog, which was fiercely shaking the coiled animal, giving the latter a kick with his foot that sent it rolling within a low clump of bushes near which it lay.

"Not very valuable game," said Howard, approaching to pick it up. "Let us take a look at it."

As he reached out to grasp the animal, it suddenly uncoiled, made a snap at his extended fingers, and ran rapidly into the thicket, disappearing from sight before they had recovered from their surprise.

"Well, there goes my game. And a good riddance," said Howard, laughing. "But if I try raccoon shooting again, I shall certainly not let him play coon with me in that sort."

Starting forward again, Solomon passed round to the other side of the small thicket in question. Just beyond it he found what seemed to be tracks of some large animal, deeply impressed on the muddy margin of a small pool.

The dog evidently scented game. He grew intensely excited, running hastily up and down the line of tracks, and finally darting off in a narrow path that led further into the swamp, either side being lined with a wall of matted vegetation. It seemed a path that had been formed and kept open by the constant passage of animals.

Solomon rapidly followed, warmed up to the true spirit of the hunter by the excitement of the dog. For a mile the animal led him by a devious route through the swamp, the path being generally so contracted that he could not mistake it, but occasionally spreading out into a wide area, clear of underbrush, and from which the continuation of the route was sometimes difficult to discover. Occasionally over a patch of firm ground, but mostly through a morass so soft that only rapid motion hindered him from sinking, now and then splashing through a standing pool, he dashed on, glimpses of the dog aiding to keep him in the right track.

At length he came up to the animal where he had stopped, apparently at fault, and running in a distressed manner, in rapid lines and circles, in search of the lost scent.

Solomon, seeking a passage out of the contracted area in which they now were, found on the other side of the space, a narrow line through the bushes, which might possibly form the continuation of the path he had been following. Whistling for the dog he forced his way into it, the water rising above his ankles at every step. After proceeding a short distance he found it becoming more open. The excitement of the dog was renewed, as if he again scented game, but now, instead of darting forward, he kept but a few steps before his master. The indications were that game of another character was at hand.

At length he caught a glimpse of an open space, through a slight parting of the bushes in front. Advancing now with the utmost caution, he pressed forward into this opening, and, hidden behind the trunk of a huge oak, found himself gazing on a sight not wholly unexpected.

Before him lay a clearing of considerable extent, on a piece of high ground, four or five feet more elevated than the general level. In the central portions of this space stood several low huts. No men were visible, but two women appeared; one engaged in domestic labors near the huts, the other walking down towards his side of the clearing.

She was of the yellow hue of a mulatto, dressed in a garment, dirty now and ragged, but evidently of rich material, while her ears and fingers were adorned with jewels, little in keeping with her general aspect.

He had plainly stumbled upon a headquarters of the outlaws, and this finery was undoubtedly the result of some of their forays. The position was well hidden by the dense thicket of bushes surrounding, it which only chance had enabled him to penetrate.

Restraining his dog he crouched closely behind his tree, waiting till she should return towards the huts. After a moment she did so, Solomon taking advantage of the opportunity to cautiously withdraw from the dangerous neighborhood. As he did so, a large dog that had followed her caught the slight disturbance of the bushes, and leaped forward, barking loudly.

"Keep still, you fool!" cried the woman. "It's only a 'possum."

The dog, unheeding her command, rushed into the swamp, and ran barking along the path by which the fugitives were now rapidly retreating.

As he came near them, Solomon's dog rushed forward to meet him, and in an instant the two animals were coiled in desperate battle, biting and snarling furiously. Solomon, seeing that his dog would inevitably be vanquished in the fight with the much larger and stronger animal, yet afraid to raise an alarm by using his rifle, drew a large hunting-knife which he carried, and rushed anxiously into the melee.

The dogs were so closely clasped together, that it was several minutes before he could use his weapon with effect. Finally, a momentary opportunity offering, he made a violent lunge, so truly dealt, that the blade was buried to the hilt in the hostile dog.

The blow was thoroughly effective, the animal fell over, stone dead, while his own dog leaped up with a loud bark of victory.

"Hush, you rascal!" cried Solomon. "Do you want to bring the hounds on us. I must get rid of the carcass. It won't do to have them know that strange eyes have seen their headquarters."

Taking up the dead animal, he carried it for some distance, and then, breaking away from a small open area which he had entered, into the thick of the undergrowth, he flung his burden into a pool of stagnant water.

Carefully closing the path he had made, so that no evidence of disturbance should appear, he rapidly dashed onward, by an opposite track, not knowing but that pursuers might be already on his trail.

The general aspect of the swamp was so similar, that he had gone a considerable distance before the absence of certain landmarks noticed in his former route, convinced him that he had lost his way.

Frightened at the possible consequences of his heedlessness, for the swamp was so extensive that he might wander for hours around in a circle without reaching any portion of its borders, he pushed forward at random, taking every path that offered itself, and in some cases, finding himself inclosed in a complete cul-de-sac of interlacing vines. A free use of the knife, however, enabled him to continue his passage—numerous narrow, scarcely perceptible paths crossing the swamp in various directions, the probable result of its long habitation by outlaws.

It grew more miry as he proceeded, till, in some places, he found himself sinking nearly to his boot tops at every step. The thicket too grew denser, and he was frequently obliged to turn back in search of some more available passage. For more than an hour he thus proceeded, becoming more hopelessly lost at every turn.

He had stopped for a moment to rest at a point of somewhat firmer consistency, and was just commencing to blame himself for not having trusted to the instinct of his dog in selecting his route, when the sharp crack of a rifle broke upon the air a short distance in front. The next moment there was a rush as of some person rapidly passing through the thicket before him, though hidden from sight by the dense bushes.

Running forward rapidly through an opening in the bushes, he heard his dog barking in advance, and the next instant perceived a roughly dressed man, with drawn knife in his hand, standing over a prostrate figure, in an open space before him. He was gazing intently towards the point whence the dog had appeared, and bore his weapon as if for defence against the animal. Catching a glimpse of Solomon, cautiously approaching with levelled rifle, he made a sudden spring backward and disappeared in the bushes. Where he had stood, lay stretched the insensible figure of Robert Howard.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE SHARPER'S STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CALEB BURT.

I am what some folks call, a sharper, a sponge, a swindler, and other such complimentary names; all opprobrious epithets I assure you, as I am neither. Some go to the extreme of calling me loafer, blackleg, thief! but then some people are in the habit of using very strong language, but they are more to be pitied than blamed; some call me scoundrel, hypocrite, adventurer! well, the last appellation I do not deny *in toto*, as I have had numerous adventures in my day, and hope to have as many more, Providence permitting.

To explain why I am insulted by the first triplet of titles:—

I was once down by Castle Garden, the great immigrant station, you know, when there were some people just coming out to go to the railroad depot up town.

There was a pretty young German girl, with a horrid heavy valise in her hands, while her brute of a lover walked behind her carrying a bird-cage and a violin. Politeness was always a prominent part of my character—so I instantly stepped up to the dear creature and took her valise from her; she smiled; and the lover looked black at me, and immediately gave her the bird-cage and violin to carry.

We had not proceeded far, when I was separated from my fair companion by a lot of heavy wagons; when at last I could cross the street, I could nowhere see the young girl, so, being tired, for the horrid thing was heavy, I entered an oyster saloon, got a glass of ale and a stew, and warmed myself by the cheerful fire, and then departed—let me see, did I pay for my provisions? By Jove, I didn't. I really was so absent-minded that I forgot it; the saloon was full of customers, and the keeper actually forgot it himself, I do believe.

I still had that odious valise, and what to do with it I didn't know, so I took it home and put it in my room, determined to discover the owner; but a policeman called upon me that evening, and said he'd come for the bag, that he knew me, and that I'd better be careful or I'd get up before long, and took the valise with him. Drat the fellow's impudence, what did he mean by saying he knew me? I never saw the man before in my life. Be careful? get up before long? Why, bless me if I can understand it at all, but there are things that no fellow can understand, as Dundreary says.

Now for that second batch of aliases. I declare it's perfectly surprising how unfortunate some fellows are, I especially. I had occasion once to meet a friend upon a corner of a certain street. Now I always make it a point never to break an appointment; so, having plenty of time, I went to the corner in question a half hour before the time, and lit a cigar, and awaited my friend's arrival. He was late, of course; and after waiting there three-quarters of an hour, a policeman, who had been eying me for some time, ordered me off, and when I expostulated with him, he actually had the impudence to club me, and push me violently out into the street, which so incensed me that, not thinking of the consequence, I rushed at him and quickly gave him a sound drubbing, took his club and pistol from him, together with his hat, coat, and watch, and darted down a side street, as I saw several more policemen coming, and I didn't want the trouble of having to silence them.

I was waited upon that evening by the same policeman who called on me before, and he demanded the articles I had stolen. Stolen! just to think of that rascal accusing me of stealing. I only took the things so I could identify the rascal, and as for the watch, it so resembled one that I had had once, that I deemed it belonged to me, and so took it for that reason. The brute of a policeman took the things, and then gave me a moral lecture, which I cut short by hurling the spittoon at his head, though luckily for him it missed him, and made a great stain on the wall, and I had to pay for a whole roll of paper to re-cover it with.

Now for the third trio of compliments; they call me a scoundrel because once at a party I mistook another man's coat and cap for my own, and went home with them, and because I kept them, when really I couldn't find the owner in spite of my inquiries for him.

They call me hypocrite because I prefer the theatre to the church, because I am complimentary to folks I don't like, and go home with ladies so as to get a good dinner. Well, my physician prescribed a generous diet; and as my landlady don't give me much to eat—she says I don't pay her, the ogress—I accept and get as many invitations as I can, because my health occupies the first place in my mind.

They call me adventurer for several reasons. I once loved a lovely girl. She was angelic, beautiful of course, or else I would not have gone to see her, as I detest anything but perfection. I am perfection myself, and I say it without a blush. She was very wealthy, or I would not have associated with her, for my relations are very particular as to the quality of my acquaintances, my uncle in particular. Well, we were married, but an unfortunate speculation ruined me, and my money and that of my wife was lost, swept away. My calumniators say that I still had it, and that the failure was only a ruse to obtain funds, but of course nobody believes them.

My wife left me, cruel thing. I knew she never loved me, and only married me for my name, which I assure you is a very aristocratic one—Smythe. She is dead now, I believe, died of a broken heart, they say; but that is all nonsense, only indulged in by silly, romantic school girls. I survived it well enough, and so did she. She probably died of apoplexy, as she always was a very hearty eater, and never could control her appetite.

I once induced a wealthy young man to go into partnership with me, he to furnish the capital and I the brains, but he ran off one day and left all the money in my hands; so in order to save it I bought me some shares in a railroad with it, and put them away safe from harm. Pretty soon the young man came back and wanted to know how the firm was getting on. I told him I thought the firm had gone up. He then asked me for his capital, but of course I could not give it to him. I told him that I merely furnished the brains, and that he ought to have attended to the capital himself.

The idiot actually brought a suit against me to recover his property. I was unfortunate in my lawyers and lost my case. I paid the fees and damages with the bonds I had, and received five hundred dollars in change as my bonds were all large, and I had no ready money to make up the difference. Being somewhat tired of the city I then took a trip into the country and rusticated awhile. I heard while there that the railroad, whose shares I had, had failed, and that the shares were worthless. How lucky it was that I had got rid of them.

I declare it is astonishing how unfortunate I am. I got into prison; it must have been a mistake; my accounts and those of my employer, a wealthy banker, got somehow mixed, and thinking I was richer than I really was, I invested largely in real estate, till one day I was accused of embezzlen and and sentenced to prison for ten years; the dea of such an atrocious deed so reacted upon my nervous system, that my hair and beard actually turned red, and so not being recognized I escaped incarceration. I would have declared myself, but folks would only have called me a lunatic or some such vulgar name, and, besides, I need a good deal of exercise, and nothing disagrees with me so much as to be confined for a long time in a close room.

It's really quite sad, but I don't seem to stick to anything; some slanderer always steps in, and takes away my *character*, and I have to live by my wits again. I try prigging sometimes, and take a person's purse out of his pocket without his knowing it, and it's strange how often I forget to give them back their property.

When I see a fat, hearty boy eating a piece of cake I always take it away; it's bad for digestion. I eat it myself, though, to get it out of the way, for I like to remove temptation from the path of the young. That accounts for my drinking so much; the more I drink the less the nice young men will have, and so the less chance of their being ruined.

You really haven't a dollar to spare, have you? I left my change all at home this morning, and I've got to get a bundle from the express office. Thank you, sir; I can't change this five, but I'll have it directly. Thank you, sir. Good morning. God bless you.

Well I must go now, for I see an unmannerly boor of a policeman coming, who is one of my worst enemies. So I'll go and have something to eat at the free lunch-counter round the corner. Good day.

☞ The Chicago Republican writes of the pending visit of the eminent Russ—"He stands over six feet, and we have no public halls wherein he can dance without bumping his head through the plaster; still, let him come, and he may tread on our trains, and draw all of our sweet silks out at the gathers, and we will not say, 'Stupid!'"

☞ A Chicago girl wrote to her lover just after the fire:—"Our wedding day was set for next week, and if you will stand up with a woman dressed in a cotton skirt and her father's overcoat, come on." The brave youth telegraphed in reply: "Get ready. I will be with you."

☞ A young man went into a florist's store on Washington street to buy a rose-bud for his affianced. Seventy-five cents was the price asked. "Will it keep?" inquired the young man. "Oh, yes, a long while." "Then you may keep it." Exit young man.

☞ The latest style of dance-cards used at balls and parties is in the shape of a book, bound in imitation of Russia leather, with a small gilt pencil attached to one side by a narrow red ribbon.

☞ A witness under cross-examination, who had been tortured by a lawyer for several hours, at last asked for a drink of water. "There," said the judge, "I think you'd better let that witness go now, as you have pumped him dry."

☞ Think of the agony of the Lewiston man who got up before daylight, built a fire and put a new silk hat upon the stove in place of the tea-kettle, and did not find out his mistake until it was burned to a crisp.

☞ The question of how old a cigar should be before being smoked is often a disputed one. Cubans like a green cigar. The workmen, who ought to know, smoke the cigars as they make them. If you go to a certain well-known cigar store in New York, already quite celebrated for its Cuban cigars made in the city, and buy a cigar there, before handing it to you the very courteous Cuban will, with great deliberation, first apply the cigar to his ear. You ask, "What is that for?" "To see, or rather hear, how dry it is. If too dry, it will snap very short. I can hear it. A green cigar is soft, and makes no noise." "How old ought a cigar to be?" "In two or three weeks, in this climate, a cigar is dry enough; longer than that does not improve it."

AFTER FIVE YEARS.

BY ETHEL DANE.

The wedding guests were departing, and listening to the musical notes of the chiming bells, whose faint echoes sounded a mournful refrain from the far off hills. I was comparing my own sad life—out of which love had passed—with that of the fair bride for whom the bells were chiming.

"Ethelyn, dear, why do you mope and look glum when I am so radiantly happy?"

And the speaker's arms stole round my waist, while her black orbs peered wistfully into my own more sober brown ones.

"Indeed, darling, I did not intend to look glum on your bridal morn; but you surprised me when my mind was full of sad thoughts, wandering away from the joys of this hour. Forgive me, Mrs. St. Elmo, and they shall not play truant again."

She crimsoned beautifully when addressed by her new title, and two pearly drops of crystal rolled from her lustrous eyes.

"Blessed is the bride that the sun shines on," she murmured, looking away at the glorious sunlight flooding each hill and dale with its splendor, lending new beauty to their green May covering. "And if the old adage is true, my life will be filled with the wine of pleasure, for the God of Fire has unveiled his face to-day. Oh, Ethie! Ethie! I'm so happy my heart aches with its fullness of joy. I scarce can realize that it is *I*—Adelle Norris—standing here in my bridal robes, with the shimmering lace falling around me, bride of Julian St. Elmo. Oh, Ethie! how I love my husband. Did you ever see any one so grand, magnificent and princely as *my* Julian?"

And a touch of pride sounded in the low, soft voice.

"There! he has missed his 'bride of an hour,' and come to search for me. Oh my love! my prince! Heaven itself would be dark without the light of your sweet eyes."

Tall and well formed, with laughing brown eyes, and an abundance of hair, thrown back in a mass of wavy ringlets from the broad high brow, Julian St. Elmo was indeed magnificent in outward appearance.

And I wondered not that Adelle Norris gave him the warm heart-love of her impulsive nature.

"Ah, truant! I've found you at last:" he said smilingly, drawing her arm through his, caressing the fair, shapely hand, on which gleamed the bridal ring. "I thought mayhap you had grown tired of Hymen's chain and sought to cast it off."

"Oh! Julian."

And the rosebud lips pursed themselves up in a pout half defiant, while over the bright young face there swept a shadow of gloom.

"There, pet, I was only teasing:" St. Elmo exclaimed, kissing away the lingering shadow. "But I came to admonish you, darling, that it is time you were preparing for travel and exchanging adieus."

Arm in arm the bride and I passed up the stair, and the gleaming dress of white satin was soon exchanged for a plainer one of gray.

"Oh, Ethie, darling!" whispered the bride as she kissed good-by, "if I could only put some of my joy and happiness into your poor, sad heart, heavy with its bitter sorrow, what a comfort it would be."

"No, Adelle; keep all the joy your bridal day brings to meet the clouds that may yet darken your life, or the breakers that may wreck it."

"As if my life would ever contain aught but pleasure and sunshine! But Julian is calling, so good-by, my sad-eyed Ethie."

And with a last, lingering kiss pressed on my lips, she passed down the broad stair, with her raven curls and gossamer veil floating backward, murmuring as she went, "My princely Julian."

I remember thinking, as they stood for a moment hand-in-hand in the wide hall below, whether the grinning old crone, Dame Fate, was not well pleased with the lives she had linked that bright May morning, with the solemn pledge, "Until death do you part."

Or whether the covenant, "As long as ye both shall live," was freighted with the cloudless sunshine for which the bride was waiting. They were going by rail to New York, then across the broad Atlantic, to wander among the ruins of the old world. Three months before, Adelle and I had listened to Julian St. Elmo and Paul Clifford, as they planned the European tour, in which we all were interested. But death, admiring a shining mark, had chilled the loving heart of my beautiful Paul, and he was sleeping under the daisies.

Pitiless fate, not content with robbing my life of love, had swept fortune away also; and it was with scalding tears and a rebellious heart, I prepared to walk alone, where three moons before rosy-winged hope had pointed to my loving Paul as protector.

With the loss of wealth came the necessity for employment; and I accepted a situation as governess to three motherless children in the sunny South.

June found me at the post of duty, bravely crushing back the rebellious longings for a sound of the dear voice hushed in death. The weariness of the dull routine was broken by lengthy letters from Adelle, giving vivid descriptions of the wonders seen. Now they were travelling up the Rhine, or floating in gondolas through the fair canals of ancient Venice; or viewing with rapt attention the marvelous beauty of the works of art adorning the galleries of Rome. Now basking beneath Italian skies, or roaming over the consecrated ground of Palestine, the Holy Land; until finally, weary of foreign travel, they had returned to their native shores, satiated with the old world, and longing for rest in the new.

A beautiful villa near Brooklyn was selected as their future home.

Five years after the bright May morning on which the twain had been made one, a servant conducted me to the spacious reception room of the St. Elmo mansion; then went to inform her mistress that a friend was in waiting.

Presently the door opened, and a haughty, stately woman swept in, on whose care-worn face I could trace no resemblance to the happy, joyous bride, from whom I had parted a half decade before.

"There is some mistake," I said, rising—"I am waiting for Mrs. St. Elmo."

"Oh, Ethie! is it possible *you* are here?" A glad light beaming in the eye, and with a cry of joy she sprang across the room, clasping me in her arms.

"It is really I, Adelle; not a vision of the brain," I answered, returning the embrace.

"There!" she exclaimed after I was comfortably seated, with bonnet and shawl laid aside. "My heart feels lighter than it has for years. This is one of my dismal days, Ethie, given over to despair; but a sight of your dear face has brought sweet visions of the past, and chased the dark-winged phantom away, with its troop of bitter memories."

"There should be no bitter memories, Adelle, in a life crowned with a husband's love," I replied. A spasm of pain or dread, I scarce could define which, swept over the fair face, and the gray lips moaned—

"Oh, Esthie, you don't know! you don't know!"

Then came a torrent of tears that I tried in vain to assuage, until the storm had spent itself, and she lay white and quivering like a lily's petal roughly torn, and left to the mercy of the blast. Through the day we wandered over the house, and I could not but admire the beautiful taste exhibited from the tiny footstool to the rosewood piano in the parlor. Splendor and magnificence were in all things, and I wondered why the woman walking by my side viewed things so listlessly, when in girlhood she would have gone into ecstasies over half the grandeur there.

But the fear of unearthing the skeleton, that we are told lurks in every household kept me silent. Two days later on entering the morning parlor, I found Adelle standing pale and rigid as a statue, but with a look of such utter woe and wretchedness as I hope never to see again.

"What has happened?" I asked, drawing the pallid cheeks between my own warm palms, and kissing the colorless lips.

No answer came, but the look of misery deepened on the white, deathly face.

"Adelle, for the sake of the old days, tell me your trouble."

"You can do me no good," she groaned. "Nothing but death can release me, or sever the chain that is binding me down in degradation."

"You degraded?" I repeated wonderingly.

"Yes, Ethelyn, degraded; there is no better word. Look there," she continued, throwing open the library door, "and tell me if that piece of insensible humanity is the man I promised to love and honor."

On a lounge lay the semblance of a man in a drunken stupor; clothes soiled with the mire and clay from the gutter; one eye blackened by a collision with some obstructing object; face swollen and distorted, and breath polluted with the foul fumes of strong drink.

Was that wreck of manhood the proud, handsome Julian St. Elmo, who had won the heart of my trusting friend?

Up and down the library walked the miserable woman, her eyes gleaming with intense scorn as they rested on the loathsome countenance of the unconscious sleeper.

"Will not your love reclaim him?" I asked.

"My love!" she answered bitterly. "Can a woman love what she loathes and abhors? As long as I believed him pure and honorable, I loved him with all a woman's trust and devotion; worshipped him as a being superior to the common herd of mortals; set him up on a throne as king of my heart, and bowed like a willing vassal before him, ready to give love, honor, and obedience which ever he wished to exact. But my king has fallen; his throne is demolished, and through that awful term—'As long as ye both shall live,' my heart will be clothed in sackcloth, wailing through the bitter years for the idol that lies shattered and broken. It is a bondage which the cold messenger can alone terminate, and though the inward life may be such as will make angels weep to behold, yet the outward form must be observed, cost what it may. Oh, Ethie! what is wealth or the luxury it brings, when one is drinking the chalice of woe to its dregs, with a heart laden with such bitter sorrow? And when in the fullness of joy on my bridal morn, I compassionated you for the sorrow I thought so heavy to be borne, did I dream my life would be such a wreck, or become a burthen so unendurable? Oh, Ethie, thank God that the chalice of love was broken for you, before your lips had tasted its bitterness!"

Over the bright carpet the rich silk was trailing, as the impassioned speaker passed up and down the room, with her wild, hollow eyes saddened by despair.

What hope or consolation—beyond kind, womanly sympathy—could be offered to a life thus stranded by the sin of intemperance: where the wild waves of trouble were surging over a heart worse than desolate, in the great ruin wrought by him who had promised to cherish and protect?

Words seemed so futile, so utterly heartless that in silence I pointed upward to the Father who watches even a sparrow's fall.

"No! no! don't point me there!" she cried. "I used to think God watched with tender mercy and love over those who were treading in the valley of tears: but now I know He is a great, calm Being, watching my life grow dark and joyless without a ray of pity. Ah! how welcome would the endless sleep of oblivion be!"

And with a low wail of anguish, she sank upon the floor.

* * * * * *

Over the young life whose happiness was thus wrecked, we draw a veil; but sitting in our own room to-night watching the fading embers of the dying fire, we have thought of the fearful reckoning in the great hereafter, waiting the divided hearts and blighted lives of those joined by the holy covenant, "Until death do us part."

Beloved and unloving it may be, but walking side by side, waiting in silence for the hour when "the silver cord will be loosed, and the pitcher broken at the fountain."

WHEN MAY DIAMONDS BE WORN?

The diamond is adapted to all styles of dress. No change of fashion prevents its use. Other kinds of jewelry may be affected. Coral is becoming to the young, but out of place upon the middle-aged; pearls are exclusively attendant upon weddings; jet, though it is now worn by ladies who are not in mourning, was and may soon again become the synonyme of grief; but on all occasions, by all ages and both sexes, the diamond may be worn, and is at once the most genteel and appropriate ornament. It is becoming alike to young and old, and is suitable for the promenade, the ball-room, the church, the dining-room, the marriage altar, or the deepest mourning. In former articles upon the diamond which have appeared in our paper, we spoke of its value depending upon its color, size and purity: we desire now to recommend its adoption as the most economical ornament from its adaptability to all styles of dressing.

For dress use, a profusion even of diamonds is not in severely good taste, though it may be an evidence of wealth. Diamonds of moderate size are the most beautiful for wear. The largest uncut diamond, weighing 330 karats, which was brought to the King of Portugal from Brazil, and whose value is estimated by some writers at $28,000,000; the famous Russian diamond of 195 karats; that of the Great Mogul, cut, weighing 280 karats; that which was purloined from a Brahminical idol, and was ultimately bought by the Empress Catharine for $450,000, an annuity of $20,000, and a title of nobility, are not suitable for personal adornment. They may be valuable because rare, and marks of royalty, but stones of more modest dimensions are more tasteful and elegant for dress purposes. The American is the most fastidious customer for diamonds. The markets of the world are searched for pure white stones to please his taste. Here, too, where wealth is more evenly distributed, there are more diamonds in use among the general public than in any other country.—*Brooklyn Eagle.*

SINGULAR EFFECT OF A DREAM.—A remarkable instance of the effect of fright in a dream occurred in an interior town of Wisconsin, recently. A young man, a school teacher, just married, spent an evening in reading to his wife incidents of Indian life and warfare in the Western country. Going to bed with his mind filled with the subject, he dreamed of living some of the scenes he had been reading of, during which he had lost his scalp at the hands of a redskin, receiving thereby a terrible fright. On being awakened by the stir in the house in the morning, he found himself unable to speak, and could only communicate with the others by writing—thus relating his dream. At last accounts he had not recovered his speech. A very sensitive young man that!

☞ This is the ladies' year.

A WORD FOR THE CHILDREN.

Children, make your mother happy,
Make her sing instead of sigh;
For the mournful hour of parting
May be very, very nigh.

Children, make your mother happy;
Many griefs she has to bear;
And she wearies 'neath her burdens—
Can you not those burdens share?

Children, make your mother happy;
Prompt obedience cheers the heart,
While a wilful disobedience
Pierces like a poisoned dart.

Children, make your mother happy;
On her brow the lines of care
Deepen daily—don't you see them?—
While your own are smooth and fair.

Children, make your mother happy;
For beneath the coffin-lid
All too soon her face, so saint-like,
Shall for ever more be hid.

Bitter tears and self-upbraidings
Cannot bring her back again;
And remorseful memories
Are a legacy of pain.

Oh, begin to-day, dear children,
Listen when dear mother speaks;
Render quick and sweet obedience;
For your highest good she seeks—

Loves you better than all others—
For your sake herself denies;
She is patient, prayerful, tender,
Gentle, thoughtful, true and wise.

Never, while you live, dear children,
Though you search the rounded earth,
Will you find a friend more faithful
Than the one who gave you birth.

Christian Observer.

Sliding into Matrimony.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"I really believe women can be the most provoking creatures in existence if they set about it."

This piece of wisdom, drawn from his own experience with the fair sex during the past month, Charley Graham muttered with a sigh.

He was standing on the steps, and watching Louise Van Meter, who was at play on the lawn with his great Newfoundland dog, which, like his master, seemed to have taken a sudden and decided fancy for the young lady.

"If she'd treat me half as much like a human being as she does Nero, I'd be satisfied," thought Charley. "At any rate, I'd try to be. She won't tantalize that dog—but she will me. She'll let me go on talking for half an hour, and then pretend she hasn't heard a word I said—doesn't know what I'm talking about. And if she finds out that I have a special aversion for anything, she's sure to parade her fancy for it, just to provoke me. She pretends she likes that snob of a Percy, with his drawl, and his affected ways, just because she knows I hate him—but I know she don't. I'll be even with her some day. If I could corner her once, and make her listen to me, and answer me honestly and frankly, I believe she'd confess that she likes me a little. But that's the worst of it: I can't get the chance to make her confess it."

Charley was fathoms deep in love with Miss Van Meter—and Miss Van Meter knew it as well as anybody. She couldn't very well remain in ignorance of the state of Charley's feelings—but she managed, with her woman's love of mischief, to keep him in a delightful state of ignorance with regard to her own.

By-and-by, she tired of her romp with Nero, in the keen winter air, and ran up the steps.

"There is to be a concert in the village this evening," Charley said, detaining her, "may I have the pleasure of your company? You haven't rode out in my new cutter yet. Say yes, and have a little mercy on me, please."

"Oh, I can't; that is, I mean I *can't go*," answered Miss Van Meter, blushing up rosily, beneath Charley's glance.

"I'd like to have you tell me why," said Charley. "If you knew, Louise Van Meter, how you keep the 'truest heart that ever beat,' and so forth, on tender-hooks, I *know* you'd relent and take pity on me. Don't you see how pale I'm beginning to look?" he asked, solemnly. "I begin to fear I shall have a decline, if this goes on much longer."

"What *kind* of a decline?" laughed Miss Van Meter, saucily.

"You provoking thing:" exclaimed Charley. "A decline of heart and hand, probably, though I begin to think you'll never give me a chance to offer them. But I want you to say yes about that concert. You *will* go, won't you?" in his sweetest tone, intended to be irresistibly coaxing.

"I can't," answered Miss Van Meter. "I've an engagement for this evening."

"With whom, I'd like to know!" said Charley, wrathfully.

"With Sarah," answered Miss Van Meter, demurely; "and Mr. Percy and another young gentleman. We're going to take some sleds to the top of the hill back of the house and have a jolly time sliding down hill. Won't you join us? There'll be room for three on Mr. Percy's sled, I guess."

"No, I won't," answered Charley, forcibly. "One sled isn't large enough for Percy and me."

"I'm sorry," laughed Miss Van Meter, thoroughly enjoying his tantalization. "I think Mr. Percy such a nice young man. So intellectual and witty."

"So intellectual!" sneered Charley. "Nero's ten times the brains that puppy has: and as for being witty, I don't know what kind of an idea you have of the article, but I think Percy comes as far from being capable of saying anything witty as he does from being able to appreciate it."

"Ah! he hasn't been able to see the point of some of your jokes," laughed Miss Van Meter, provokingly. "I see what the matter is."

She ran in with a saucy smile, and Charley felt as he always did when he attempted to get the advantage of her.

Charley didn't go to the concert, but he did go to bed early. As soon, in fact, as he heard Percy's insipid twaddle in the parlor.

After he had got to bed he heard the two young ladies and the gentleman go by the house, drawing their sleds, and ascend the hill back of the house, laughing and chatting in high spirits.

Shortly after that his uncle came and asked permission to share his bed with him. His aunt had gone off to spend the night; the old gentleman was subject to spells of asthmatic pain, and did not like to sleep alone.

In five minutes after his head touched the pillow he was fast asleep, if one might judge by the snores which he emitted.

Charley lay wide-awake, and thought about the party up the hill.

By-and-by he heard the sound of the sleds gliding over the snow, and the laugh and shout of those who were enjoying the slide down the long hill. Then he heard them going back, tugging the sleds up for another trip down.

Then he heard the sleds coming again, and then a shout as if something had happened, but the sleds kept on, and one of them seemed coming square against the house. Nearer and nearer: and then, *cling!* went something against the casement, the window swung open with a crash, and a sled shot in across the room and brought up with a thud against the farther side of the room, making the walls tremble, and the trinkets on the mantle-shelf jingle like sleigh-bells.

Charley raised up and took a look at the situation.

"Who's there?" he asked.

"Me," answered a voice from the other side of the room, very faintly.

The first time the pleasure-seekers went down the hill, everything passed off splendidly. The snow was covered with an icy crust, over which the sleds glided with a swiftness that was delightfully exhilarating. The keen, bracing air had a crispness in it that was like a tonic.

It was hard work, tugging the sleds up the steep hill, over the glazed surface of the snow, but the pleasure afforded by a ride down, paid for the labor expended in getting to the top.

At last the top was reached, and preparations began for another trip. Miss Van Meter took her position on the sled, and Percy took his place behind her, that he might better manage the steering apparatus.

Then they started. For a little way all went well. Then Percy made a wrong turn, and the sled ran over a heap of stones, pitching him off headforemost over a drift. Miss Van Meter could not help laughing to see him floundering about, as she swept on. She grabbed the steering-handles with an energy born of desperation. She gave a turn one way and the sled threatened to capsize, then a turn the other way, and it veered round and went straight ahead. She began to think she should get down hill all right, when some unaccountable freak seized the sled, and it turned half an angle to the left, and ran directly toward the house. The hill came down behind the house, close up to the chamber windows, and in winter the snow drifted the space between the house and hill completely full. This winter it was level with the window-sills. A cold chill ran over Miss Van Meter. What if her vehicle should go through one of the windows? She gave a frantic wrench to the levers on each side, but the sled went right on, and struck one of the windows. It swung open, and in she shot, bringing up as we have seen, in Charley's bedroom.

"Who's there?" repeated Charley, not able to recognize the faint voice which made reply to his inquiry. He hoped it was Percy, He'd get up, if it was, and pitch him out, headforemost."

"Me, Louise!" answered Miss Van Meter, with a little more energy in her voice.

The old gentleman began to stir about and threatened to wake up. A deep silence reigned for a few minutes, then his struggles subsided, and he was fast asleep again.

"How are you going to get out with your sled?" asked Charley in a whisper.

"I don't know," was the faint reply.

"I'll help you on conditions," said Charley.

"What are they?" inquired Miss Van Meter.

"They're easy enough to comply with," said Charley. "Think what Uncle Joseph would say, if he should wake up and find you here in the dead hours of the night," a touch of the theatrical in his whisper.

"Tell me your conditions! quick! I want to get out," said Miss Van Meter. "They'll miss me."

"If you'll promise to marry me, I'll get the sled out for you, and promise to never tell," whispered Charley. "If you won't, I'll wake up Uncle Joseph."

"What a wretch!" exclaimed Miss Van Meter from her position on the sled. "Of course I won't promise any such thing."

"Then I'll wake up Uncle Joseph," said Charley relentlessly.

Uncle Joseph evidently thought about waking up himself. He gave a series of sneezes which had all the popular elements of a war-whoop in them.

"Seems to me it's cold here," he groaned, half awake and half asleep. "Guess the weather's changed since—sin'—" and then he dropped off again.

"Haven't you any pity on the poor old gentleman?" demanded Charley. "He's evidently catching his death-cold. All from your hardness of heart."

"I'll talk with you in the morning," said Miss Van Meter.

"No you don't," said Charley. "I've got you cornered, and I'm going to improve the opportunity. Yes or no?"

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself taking such an advantage of me," said Miss Van Meter, indignantly.

"I suppose so, but I ain't," answered Charley. "I'll count ten. If you don't say yes before that time I'll wake up Uncle Joe. One, two, three, four, five—"

"Yes, then, if I must!" said Miss Van Meter, struggling hard not to laugh. "Now, be so kind as to tell me how I am to get out."

"Through the door," answered Charley, in great delight at his victory.

"But the key?" demanded his affianced.

"There isn't any," answered Charley. "I never lock the door."

"What a wretch you are!" exclaimed Miss Van Meter, flatteringly. "If I'd known that, do you suppose I'd have stayed here palavering with you?"

"But you didn't, you see!" said Charley. "That's where I had you. Good night, my dear!"

Miss Van Meter slammed the door to with a bang. Charley got up and threw the sled out of the window, closed the sash, and drew the curtain. Then he went back to bed. In the morning he got up before his uncle woke, and swept up the bits of broken glass, and fragments of crust and snow, that the old gentleman might get no suspicion of what had occurred.

At the breakfast table, Miss Van Meter was shy and silent. An unusual thing for her.

"I declare," said Uncle Joseph, "I do believe it thundered last night. I heard an awful rumble, any way. I should think your room was haunted, if I believed in spirits. I heard whisperings, or something that sounded like them, and all kinds of noises. I took an awful cold, too. Can't breathe, hardly. Didn't sleep a wink last night: not a wink. Blessed if I'll stay in *that* room again."

Charley and Miss Van Meter looked, or *tried* to look, very unconscious of the secret of the "haunted room."

"I don't think Lou liked the sport very much," laughed Sarah. "Percy fell overboard, and she ran away from us, when she got down the hill, and was in bed when I got in. We hunted for her, but didn't find her nor the sled, and I thought, perhaps, she'd had enough of the fun, and forsaken us. I should think you might have spoken to me when you came in, Lou, and not left me out there alone."

Miss Van Meter made some inaudible reply.

After breakfast, Charley caught her in the hall.

"Yes, last night, shall be yes this morning, shan't it?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered, looking very much like a wild-rose. "But I couldn't help myself, you must remember. I'll do so I said, not because I care for *you*, sir, but *just to keep my word.*"

☞ An old lady lately died at Kingston, Pa., who had not crossed the threshold of her house for thirty years, except once, when washed out by a flood.

☞ Indianapolis courts are shaken from centre to circumference over a suit for the possession of five pints of milk.

ROMANCE.

BY F. W. LORING.

In the summer of 1871, a weary traveller might have been seen riding through the verdurous lanes of Owen's Valley, California.

The scenery about him was unquestionably high-toned in the extreme. To the right the Sierra Nevada, with its snow-capped peaks and purple sides, stretched its slow length along like an endless Alexandrine. To the left willows were seen lining the fertile meadows; and the musical ripple of innumerable mountain streams, engaged in irrigating just as hard as they could, was heard.

The traveller could not be called handsome. His complexion was black and tan; his hair, short and spiky, was admirably calculated to defy the attempts of any Indians to secure his scalp; while his beard flowed in irregular but luxuriant masses over his chin and neck. In justice, however, to the rider, it should be remarked that his attire was not calculated to enhance any personal attractions which he might otherwise have been credited with. A blue-scarlet-and-green flannel shirt, much faded and shrunken, and entirely destitute of buttons, enfolded his thorax, and was itself partially covered by a tattered vest, whose lining floated in shreds behind him in the breeze. The brim of his hat had apparently suffered mastication, while the crown presented a crushed-and-sat-upon aspect. One suspender held up his blue army trowsers, on the cerulean back-ground of whose material, stains and black thread could be discerned. Yet this man was a youth of promise, with a rising literary reputation and liberal education. In his pocket was a pencil and a note-book, and on his brow a shadow, which might have been care, or which might have been contrariness.

"Come, get up, Evil Merodach," he cried, addressing his mule in an energetic manner, with forcible language, "for we have a long way to go before we reach camp. Hallo, there's a rancho. Perhaps I can get some milk there." He spurred his mule forward until he reached the gate.

A small girl, apparently nine years of age, appeared at the door.

"Have any soldiers gone by here?" he asked.

"Yes," said the child; "and they are in camp about a mile from here."

"Then," said the stranger, dismounting, "I can wait a moment. Is your mother in?"

"No, sir," said the small child; "I don't have her round here, you bet."

"Well, is your father in?" asked the stranger, again.

"No, sir," said the child. "This ranche ain't the old man's no way. It belongs to Baxter—Jabez Baxter, Esquire."

"Well, is Mr. Baxter in then?"

"No, he ain't."

"Well, is his wife in, then?"

"Yes sir. I am her."

"What!" said the stranger.

"I'm Mrs. Baxter," said the little girl.

"Mrs. Baxter," said the stranger, "how old are you?"

"Going on ten," said Mrs. Jabez Baxter.

"And how old—Mrs. Baxter, do you read the newspapers?"

"Once in awhile," said Mrs. Baxter.

"Baxter, then, I suppose, does not take one?"

"No, sir," said Mrs. Baxter; "but he borrys one sometimes."

"Well," said the inquisitive stranger, "I am going to interview you. Were you ever interviewed, Mrs. Baxter?"

"No," said Mrs. Baxter. "It don't hurt none, does it?"

"Not as a rule," said the inquisitive person, taking his note-book out.

"Well, say," said Mrs. Baxter, "I ain't going to let you do it for nothing, you know."

"Certainly not," said the inquisitive person. "How much do you want?"

"Well, about four bits would be right," said Mrs. Baxter.

"Give me a glass of milk," said the stranger, "and answer some questions, and you shall have four bits."

"Go ahead," said Mrs. Baxter, concisely.

"Tell me," said the inquisitive person, "how you came to marry Mr. Baxter."

"Well," said Mrs. Baxter, "women is scarce round here, and Baxter wanted some help, and he won't have no Chinese around bossing things when he's away. Me and him's both down on them fellows. So Baxter and dad, who was old partners, determined that I had better marry him, as I was the oldest. I've got a sister living; she's only seven. She wanted to get married, too; but marm said she warn't going to have it, no way. No child of her'n should be married before she was eight years old."

"Your mother must be a nice woman," said the inquisitive stranger, writing. "I should like to know your mother."

"Oh! she'd just as lieves," said Mrs. Baxter. "She isn't a bit particular, she ain't."

"And—it's a delicate question—but are you in love with Mr. Baxter?" asked the rising journalist.

"I guess so," said Mrs. Baxter. "He treats me pretty well, and lets me go for them Chinese that he employs; and that's bully good fun, I tell you. But I reckon I'll get divorced before long. I know a girl, she ain't only three years older'n me, and she's married to her second husband already."

"You're a rule, then, and not an exception," said the inquisitive person.

"Hey?" said Mrs. Baxter.

"Are there many other girls of your age round here who are married?"

"Three or four," said Mrs. Baxter. "You ask a heap of questions, don't you?"

"I do, Mrs. Baxter," said the stranger, "and it is thus that I acquire a princely income and a world-wide reputation. Here are your four bits. Poor little girl! Tell Mr. Baxter that I will send him a newspaper before long. Do I keep to the right or the left?"

"To the right, stranger," said Mrs. Baxter.

"Come, Evil Merodach, let's go to camp," said the stranger, and, mounting his mule, he buoyantly rode away.

☞ The Louisville Courier-Journal thus cruelly satirizes the poetical effusions the Grand Duke suffered under when in Boston:

All hail, bully boy! The undersigned ass
And the rest of the asses here, solid as one,
Would lick your Imperial boots as we pass,
O child of your mother! O son of a gun!

☞ A man was frozen to death recently, whilst riding on the top of an omnibus in Paris.

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PROSPECTUS FOR 1872.

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By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "One Woman's Experience," "Jealousy," etc.

QUEEN COQUETTA.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Prince Charming, etc., etc.

ONLY A WISH.
By A. M. DANA, author of "Jarring Chords, etc., etc.

MISSION WORK.
By Mrs. MARGARET HOSMER, author of "A Turn in Fortune's Wheel," etc., etc.

AN EVERY-DAY HEROINE.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "Solid Silver," "A Little Money," etc.

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☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

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☞ Mr. Quilp suggests that when a man takes a pyramid stove for the proprietor of a store, and asks it out to take something, it is getting dusky fast.

☞ More boys run away to sea from Vermont, than from any other New England state.

THE

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, JAN. 13, 1872.

OUR NEXT NOVELET.

About the first of February we design commencing a new novelet, entitled

SEVEN GRAVES;

or,

THE HEIRS OF DUNLEATH.

BY ESTHER SERLE KENNETH.

This is a picturesque and fascinating story, and will, we think, afford great pleasure to our readers.

NIGHT.

Gradually the daylight is fading; shadows imperceptibly steal around; the distant mountains assume the appearance of vast stone quarries, while the bright green of the lawn loses its freshness and becomes a sombre gray; the delicate pink of the rose is converted into a neutral tint, and all nature sinks into darkness and repose, but not into the apathy of passive inaction, for nature is never idle.

While earth is busy preparing for its season of rest, other changes are taking place in the heavens above us. One by one the stars come forth like newly-found jewels glittering on the breast of night, and gleaming all the brighter as darkness spreads her sable mantle over the hills. Proudly Orion girds on his diamond-studded belt, as if in anticipation of valiant deeds during the darkness. Andromeda sadly lights the orient lamps that reveal her captivity, and as Jupiter in all his grandeur magnificently takes his commanding position, the lovely Pleiades modestly appears before him, to plead the restoration of their loved and lost. Jean Paul beautifully says "not one star goes down but that another rises to fill its place," so it may be that somewhere in the shifting scene some silvery light is beaming in place of the lost.

How strikingly do these mighty vigils remind us of our own lives! As the daylight of prosperity fades from our sky, as the glowing hopes of youth lose their bright, vivid coloring, and evening shadows creep on apace over the drooping heart, does not the night-time of adversity bring forth aspirations one by one that lift up the spirit and illumine it with a dazzling beauty unseen and unfelt in the light of day?

How much of brightness did that darkness bring forth which obscured the earthly sight of Homer and Milton! Truly, their souls were tried in the furnace of affliction, but instead of being overcome by the scathing flames, they shone with more resplendent lustre than if a universe had never veiled itself from their gaze. When the fact was revealed to Milton that this wide, beautiful world, which his genius so brilliantly clothed in all that was grand and glorious, was henceforth to be enveloped in darkness for him, he cried out,—

"Oh, dark, dark, dark amid the blaze of noon,
Irrevocably dark, total eclipse,
Without all hope of day.
'Let there be light, and light was over all!'
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave!"

But in later years he recognized the mighty touch of that Great Being he adored, and referred to his blindness as being "the shadow of a heavenly wing following upon his footstep" through which

"The pure spirit of celestial light
Shines on his soul, that he may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight."

MISS HOOK IS ADVISED.

Folks say I ought to be contented with my lot, and wear a cheerful face from Monday morning to Saturday night, to say nothing of the day that comes between! And I suppose it's all true, but somehow Belindy Price and Marvill Graves don't seem to be just the ones to tell me of it.

There's Belindy now—used to wear my old clothes when we were girls together, and was as proud of 'em as could be; she always had to work hard for other folks, and hadn't no time to be pleasurin' around. I don't suppose *she* was contented in *them* days! But one day Deacon Price's wife died, and Belindy, she helped at the funeral. Of course the deacon—he's a mighty sharp man—saw how handy she was to have around, and kind of hinted to her that she might come and stay if she would change her name for his!

Since then, she has been set up.

She wears a silk gown where I wear calico; she rides in her carriage, and I walk. Yes, it's easy for *her* to preach contentment! But jest wait till she's a widder, with nobody to stand up for her rights, and every man's hand agin her, and I guess she'll sing another tune!

And Marvill Graves is a homely old maid—ten times homelier 'n I am; but she's managed to get a *beau*—the first one she ever had in her life—and on the strength of that, she must turn around and tell me it's *my* duty to be contented!

I don't know what *I'm* to be contented with! I've got to earn my own livin' to begin with, instead of havin' it fetched to me on a gilt edged plate!

And if I take my own money and buy a few fol-de-rols to make myself look like *other* people, folks stare and say: "Dear me, I thought that old maid, Hook, was played out long ago; but I declare, she's alive yet!"

And that's what *I'm* to put on a cheerful face about! JERUSHA.

COURTSHIP.

Falling in love is an old fashion, and one that will yet endure. Cobbet, a good, sound English writer, says:—"Between the ages of fifteen and twenty-two, all people will fall in love." Shakespeare pushes out this season to the age of forty-five. The Greek epigram on a statute of Cupid, reproduced by Voltaire and others, is perfectly true:—

"Who'er thou art, thy master see!
Who was, or is, or is to be."

No one escapes from this passion. We find in all past history, the quaintest, quietest of men, the most saintly, cold, stone-like beings, have all had their moments of intense love-madness. The grave, sententious Johnson, the great and good Sir Samuel Romilly, Cæsar, Napoleon, David, Solomon, Socrates, all were slaves of the power, which few, if any, can control.

So much for its universality. Its influence admitted, its nature known, the diagnosis, in fact, of the disease being made, and its course determined, we may all of us make up our minds not to oppose it, but to control it. We must all, being men and women, fall in love and go a courting. Granted, but there is a method even in this; let us fall in love wisely and well.

Now, any one who could teach a nation how to do so would deserve a statue of gold. He would deserve it more than any inventor, philosopher, or law-giver that ever lived. No one man can do so; but he can do something toward it. In the first place, we must get rid of the idea that love cannot be directed. We believe that it can. It will not do to dam up the stream till it overflows. It is a passion, and one of great force; but surely it is not a blind, foolish one.

So much happiness depends upon courtship that it is really a serious matter—the most important, save one, in life; and that one is marriage itself. In ninety cases out of a hundred, people do not fall over head in love all of a sudden. There is the beginning, the middle and the end to that, as there is to everything in life. Companionship, small attentions, a thousand little niceties, precede the passion; and it is then that young people should be on the look-out.

It is well to remember that courtship is the real spring time of life; that nothing sordid or base should approach—nothing mean enter the minds of the lovers. He is about to pay her, and she him, the highest compliment a man or woman can pay. He circumscribes all his chances or hopes in one. To him she gives up all her rights, her liberties, her property, her very fate.

There is one thing very certain, that the most enjoyable, freshest and most beautiful portion of life should call forth all our finest feelings. A man should be excused, nay, honored, if he believes that no one in the world can equal the woman of his choice, and the woman, on her part, should not doubt that her lover possesses due energy of body and nobility of character, that he is at least good, and, with the common chances of us all a little in his favor, might be great.

So, as the sun rises in the morning, chasing away the darkness of night, and tinting all the little clouds with a roseate hue, beautiful in its promise, noble in its strength, fit herald of a bright and pure day, even so should the true morning of life rise in each heart, and gild the coming day. Love, desire, faith, esteem, and all the wondrous anticipations of hope should be on our side; so that, even if, after the sweet pastime of courtship, the day should be stormy, and the gusts of misfortune arise, a sweet remembrance of the morning will cheer us through all.

MAKE STRAIGHT PATHS.

Young men, when they first go away from home, and young women, at their first entrance upon society, are very apt to incur needless risks to character and reputation from sheer foolhardiness. They do not intend to do wrong, but they wish to "use their freedom." They feel strong, and are wise in their own conceit. They would like to do some daring deed and come out unscathed, just to falsify the predictions of older heads. We have known many youths to throw themselves in the way of wicked temptation, and to walk purposely on the edge of some fatal precipice, for the mere purpose of showing their moral agility in escaping.

For such, and for all who have any influence with such, we have a message worth considering. "Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed." Not even the Son of God would make a needless leap from the pinnacle of the temple. Angels will bear us up in every danger, so that no person doing his duty shall suffer bruising; but he who chooses the roughest and most dangerous paths without being called to tread them, is tempting God to leave him to the natural results of his own weakness.

TIME IN RHYME.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY HOOD ALSTON.

Time is an endless chain,
Whose links are ages, years, and days,
Wrought by one whom nature pays
The highest tribute of her praise,
In all her wondrous works and ways.

Time is an eternal stream
Whose source is life. A channel wide
And deep down which we glide
Distinct, apart, yet side by side,
From early dawn till even tide.

Time is a mighty sower.
He walks the earth with solemn tread,
Casting right and left the seed
That germinates and bears the meed
Of every passing thought and deed.

Time is a reaper too;
His field the universal lot.
The waving grain his hand has wrought,
Is garnered in from every spot.
He is champion of life's battle fought.

Like grain before the sickle cast,
Man to him must yield at last.

Time is a hoary giant,
He lays his hand on Neptune's locks,
And drags him from his bed of rocks:
To Nature says, "Here spread your bed,"
And verdant fields appear instead.
The course of rivers he has traced,
He chains Eolus in his haste,
Touches mountains and they crumble,
Winks at Kingdoms and they tremble.
Suns rise, stars set, and systems roll,
Subject all to his control.

Time is a monarch old.
Gray were his locks when earth began
To circle round her infant sun.
His chariot wheels had spun and spun,
Across the eternal ages run,
He saw the world's primeval plight
When robed in dread oblivion's night;
Behold creation's opening sight,
And heard God say, "let there be light."

Time is an endless chain,
Whose links are ages, years, and days,
Wrought by one whom Nature pays
The highest tribute of her praise,
In all her wondrous works and ways.

GOSSIP FOR LADIES.

THE CITY FASHIONS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—Among the pretty novelties brought out for the holidays, is a little toy known as the "fan parasol"—a trifle of silk and lace, whalebone and ebony, that can be folded up into an immeasurably small compass, and hidden away in that most convenient of all receptacles, the muff, to be produced when the sun, like a self-assured old rascal as he undoubtedly is, will persist in looking the fair promenader square in the eyes. Very annoying it is always, even though there be snow and ice upon the pavements, and a disagreeable chilliness in the wintry air. A summer parasol would not do, as it needs must rob one of quite too much of the genial warmth, which in fullest measure would be grateful, did not the bright rays so dazzle the eyes.

Much complaining has been indulged in by pretty femininity, and headaches innumerable have been laid to old Sol's charge; but at last a kind genius comes to the rescue with the little screen above mentioned. From its dual nature it will claim great popularity. As a fan, it is, if possible, prettier than when used as a parasol; it is light, graceful, convenient, and might be considered expensive were its capabilities in the way of usefulness not taken into consideration. Very handsome ones may be purchased for twenty-five dollars, but the more elegant, with cover of *points*, and handle of coral, or mother of pearl, are valued at fifty dollars.

For the opera they are particularly admired, and can be easily distinguished from the ordinary fan by a peculiarity of shape and the manner of holding them, which must be seen to be appreciated.

Another novelty coming in with the New Year is the pocket opera glass, a very, *very* great improvement on the ones hitherto seen, which, ornamented in every possible manner, and fashioned with all the artist's skill, were still burdensome, and the moment the curtain went down were delivered to brother Fred for transportation. Sometimes brother Fred forgot to return them, and having a suspicious wife at home who nightly examined his pockets, trying to discover something she did not want to know, she couldn't help stumbling upon the opera glasses. She shed bitter tears, perhaps, may be contemplated suicide, but you can depend upon it she got angry at last, and came down upon the astonished Fred in such a way that the poor fellow for the time being, hardly knew whether to plead guilty or not guilty.

Now all this was the fault of the opera glass, and just so long as manufacturers persisted in making them so large and burdensome, just so long such scenes were of frequent occurrence. But what a blessing will this little new invention prove! It is neat, compact, and so small that it can be carried in the portmonnaie if desired, while it is quite as powerful as the larger ones.

But while speaking of novelties, I must not forget to mention a rumor coming all the way from Baden Baden, carrying upon its wings the intelligence that the most fashionable travelling costumes are made of what is known among us as Turkish toweling—the coarse brown material seen in bath houses.

The idea is rather incomprehensible at first, and one naturally wonders why a fabric with so few pretensions to beauty should be pressed into a service of this kind. But it is stated that made into a Polonaise and looped over a handsomely trimmed lower skirt, there is nothing ungraceful or *outre* in its appearance, that on the contrary, there is a style about it a little in advance of anything yet seen.

"Coming events cast their shadows before," and the early spring will doubtless welcome these same costumes to our shores. Toweling will go up in price, and everybody will have a polonaise. But, much I fear me it will be a fashion that will not last; though there is one advantage it will have over many other evanescent things, ladies wearying of it, can wash their hands of the whole affair, and have something to dry them on. Housekeepers will not lose anything, for should the fashion prove ephemeral, the dress will work up beautifully into dish-cloths and the like.

Novelties in ornaments are plenty, some of them in good taste, and some of them admitting of discussion on that point. Neck-chains and lockets are quite as fashionable as ever, but are now worn over the high neck dress. There was a time when these little trifles were considered protection enough for the neck, even in the bleakest weather; but a stubborn bronchitis and a good smart congestion of the lungs here and there, convinced our fashionables that low neck dresses without furs were not the thing for this climate, and like—women, they flew to the other extreme. It was a trial to them though. That pretty chain with little locket nestling so lovingly upon the soft, white breast was "too sweet for anything," and it was terrible not to take the chances of freezing to display it. But that better sense, for which ladies one and all are remarkable, prevailed, and the fashion was discarded—but not the chain and locket. This year we have them in exaggerated widths and sizes. The most fashionable are twisted rope chains, the cable chain, and the large round links of pale gold. Watch chains are the long opera chains that pass around the neck, with a tassel end, and a slide that answers for a broach. Cameos and paintings, and sometimes porcelain likenesses are put in these slides. The popular gold bracelet is a thick, heavy looking band two or three inches wide, with light Greek ornamentation, or else a floral design in colored gold. There is, however, nothing prettier than the chain bracelets that fastening with a slide can be made to fit any wrist. Diamonds are not set heavily or in close clusters this season, but are placed far apart to display the beauty of the stones. An exception to this is the ribbon necklace of diamonds, in which the stones are adjacent to each other without visible setting, and the necklace is made as flexible as a ribbon by means of springs underneath.

ITEMS.

Ladies shoes with gold studs for buttons are in market.

White rose and wood violet are the newest perfumes.

Black lisse Russian leather with solid silver mountings, is the favorite leather for pocket-books.

A novelty in mourning stationery, is a sober tinted gray with black border, which is a decided relief from the black and white.

Japanese bird cages made of bamboo, in singularly picturesque shapes, are exhibited.

Bonbonniers for holding candies are of richly painted porcelain, enamel and gilt, or of beautifully painted or embroidered satin or *moire*.

OLIVE KING.

THAT PHOTOGRAPH.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

How very differently the two sexes view things, don't they? Women never see things as men do, and *vice versa*.

A few weeks ago I sat for some photographs, and for the first time in my life got good ones. Jones (the Madison artist) always gives good pictures, but I had never tried him before, and that is why I never had good pictures. But these were good. At least Jones said they were, and he ought to know. They were certainly nicely taken, and finished in the most approved style. He said they were natural. I didn't know, because they were taken in a position in which I had never seen myself—in fact, a three-cornered view of my face, which I *could not* see without the aid of three or four mirrors, and as I don't possess but *one*, of course I had never been enabled to view myself from the necessary standpoint. When they were sent home, all nicely touched off with that porcelain finish which Jones always gives his pictures, I looked at them curiously, and said to a friend who happened to be in at the time, "Those pictures look better than I do."

Friend, who was elderly and unprejudiced, said: "They neither look better nor worse. There"—holding one up by my face—"you are as like as two peas."

Just then there was a hard knock at the door, and a young man entered. I showed him one of the pictures. "Very good, indeed," he said, "very good. Splendidly finished and all that, but it hardly does you justice. The light falls in a way that makes your features—especially the nose—look a little larger than the original organ, and the eyes being turned away, we lose the expression, which is a great item in a picture; and you have a good deal of color, which is lost in the pallor of the photograph. Still it is good, very good, indeed."

Just then there was another rap, and in came a young lady. Young man handed her the photograph. She gazed a moment and smiled meaningly. "Well!" she said, tossing it down, "I guess *I'll* go and sit for some pictures. Artists make *anybody* good-looking now-a-days. It is surprising how pictures will flatter."

"Why, you don't think this picture flatters, surely!" exclaimed the young man.

"Mercy, yes!" cried young lady. "I never saw a more flattering photograph."

Now, there is a spirit of "*contrariness*" about me that shows itself upon such an occasion as this. The young lady was *envious* because I had at last got a good picture, and I knew it; and I think the flights of imagination I indulged in for her benefit were excusable.

"Oh, *do* you?" I asked sweetly. "Why, I am sure, as my young gentleman friend here has said, I think the picture is *good*, only it scarcely does me justice. For instance, you will notice that my Grecian nose is somewhat magnified in the picture—that organ which all connoisseurs of beauty think so regular—and the sweet and tender expression of my delicately chiselled mouth is almost entirely lost, as only one side shows, and you can't tell much by a one-sided mouth. Then again the crowning beauty of my face—my fathomless hazel eyes—are turned away, as my friend has remarked, and their fine expression lost. And, as he also says, the mild blush-rose tint on the cheeks, and the delicate sea-shell hue of the lips in the picture are lost in a dull pallor. And my hair is brushed up in such a manner that it completely hides the classic outlines of my well poised head."

I paused to get breath and notice the effect of my words. My elderly friend's eyes were twinkling, the young man was biting his lip very hard, and the young lady was looking thoughtful. I was convincing her.

"Pray why did not the artist place you in a position to catch all those beauties?" she asked.

"Oh, he said it would never do," I answered gravely. "I told him I wanted to look my best in the photo., but he said he would rather place me so a portion of my charms would be hidden, or rather toned down, for he couldn't stand the crush that a real, natural picture of me in the show-case would bring. He said the whole city would be in his rooms, and he couldn't stand it anyhow."

The young lady looked at me searchingly, but I was so grave, she concluded I must be in earnest; and the young man came to my rescue, and between us we convinced her that, though the picture was very fine, regarded as a work of art, it was only a dim shadow of the blazing beauty of my countenance. But if I hear that she has expressed the opinion that my organ of self-esteem is undeveloped, I shall not be surprised.

AN INCIDENT.

The Boston Traveller mentions a pleasant incident which occurred in connection with the visit of the Grand Duke to the Massachusetts Historical Society Rooms. Just as the party were leaving, it says, Admiral Possiet took from his pocket a small envelope and handed it to Mr. Winthrop, saying, that perhaps the contents would be of sufficient interest to entitle them to a place in the Society's cabinet. On opening the envelope, three oak leaves and a little twig were found. These were accompanied by a statement in Russian, that the leaves and twig were taken from an oak tree at St. Petersburg, which grew from an acorn, planted by the Emperor of Russia himself, received from Mr. George Sumner, of Boston, which he took from a tree which shades Washington's tomb, at Mt. Vernon.

☞ Many gentlemen wear shirt-studs composed of gold and the hair of their *fiancee*.

UNTO DEATH.

O, stillness in the twilight
I am sitting silently,
When the glory of the sunlight
Leaves its impress in the sky:
And a low voice seems to whisper,
With passion in each breath,
"I will love thee, love, forever;
You may trust me unto death."

And I live upon the echo
Of that passionate refrain,
And my hope is firm and steadfast
I shall hear it once again:
Though years may pass and vanish,
And life grow worn and cold,
I am waiting the continuance
Of those pleading words of old.

It may be an illusion,
A myth, a fancy bare;
But it keeps my heart from breaking,
And my life from much despair.
And as long as life shall linger,
Comes the echo of each breath,
"I will love thee, love, forever;
You may trust me unto death!"

FOUND ADRIFT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CYD RICHMOND.

"There she blows!"

"Where away? Ah, I see. But that's a good one, you know."

"You're right, and a girl too."

"Oh, girls can keep their mouths shut under water, if people do say they can't out of it, and that's open to argument."

The subject of these remarks was a young lady in a red bathing-dress, whose firm stroke and endurance, with a final dive, had carried her out beyond the snowy breakers, in which a small party of bathers were tumbling, laughing, and screaming, as the great waves tossed them wildly about, boldly slapping young ladies' faces, and without the slightest regard to etiquette or back hair. The young men, whose admiration had been excited by the somewhat unusual sight of a young lady who could really go into salt water without fear or without squealing, and above all who could swim like a man, were leaning over the "washboard" of the "Bohemian," a small sloop-yacht, which lay at anchor within good hailing distance of the beach, and within fishing distance of one of the immense walls of granite which shut in the narrow strip of sunny beach at the sides, but left it open in front, to the full sweep of the broad Atlantic.

The fish would not bite. The sun was hot. It was getting monotonous, when the attention of the first speaker, Winthrop Sargent, and his friend, Dick Bronson, were attracted by the swimmer. Confident of her own power, she had gone well out, and now turned to go back, but though making greater efforts, she seemed to gain slowly.

"By George!" cried Sargent, "the undertow's got her!"

"You're right; but she swims well. Just see how she strikes out! I'll bet on the Red Jacket."

"No, sir, she's getting blowed; she's losing already. Thunder! there she goes. Haul in the tender, quick. There! the dory's so light I can go it alone better."

"All right! Second time down she goes."

"Give it to her, Win," cried Dick, as Sargent sculled away with all his strength and skill toward the drowning girl. She rose again, but sank before he could reach her. There was a scream from the frantic ladies on the beach. Sargent threw off his coat and was after her.

After two or three strokes he felt something rush violently by him. He clutched wildly and caught hold of a dress, clung to it desperately, and rose with the unconscious girl to the surface.

His boat had drifted away; and taking the dress in his teeth, dog-fashion, he struck out for the yacht, rather than attempt to follow the drifting "dory," but he was already terribly exhausted, and but for Dick, could scarcely have reached it, Dick, though not a good swimmer, had taken the water with a rope fastened round his waist, and having reached his struggling friend, drew him and his helpless burden into the yacht.

"Now then," said Dick, "what's to be done?"

"Turn her on her face," puffed Sargent, when he had regained breath enough. "If she were only a man."

"Where'd be the romance?" put in Dick, whose spirits rose as soon as he was out of the water, (for to some people salt water and spirits don't mix well!)

"Dry up!" said Sargent.

"Wish I could," said Dick, determined not to be frightened.

"No, yell," said Sargent, "for one of those ladies. Did you have any of that 'sea-sick cure' after the last blow?"

"Where's the flask? There now, she's coming too."

"We'll put this blanket over her to keep off the chill. Why the dickens don't they hurry?"

Meanwhile Dick's powerful lungs had made known what was wanted, and a young fellow who had rushed down from the carriages had recovered the boat, which had drifted up to the rocks, and seizing a moment of comparative quiet, he succeeded in getting one of the ladies into the dory, and putting her along side the yacht. The young lady, who was already recovering, was taken into the cabin, dried, wrapt in warm blankets, and when sufficiently strong, safely landed with her companion, and taken home in a carriage. The "Bohemian" immediately got under way.

"Wonder what's her name," said Dick.

"Wonder where she's staying?" said Sargent.

"What! you didn't ask? Well, ain't you a stupid?"

"You're another," countered Sargent, and subsided, devoting himself to sailing the yacht, and to speculation in regard to the beautiful swimmer. The yacht finally came to anchor some distance up the river, which opened into the Ocean near the scene of their adventure; and the young men walked up to the house of Sargent's father, at which they were staying.

"Hallo," exclaimed Sargent, as they entered the gate, "who's this?"

A young lady, with a beautiful face, and symmetrical, well developed figure, stood in the doorway.

"By George, Win, it's the mysterious Mermaid of the morning!" said Dick.

"What! you here?" cried Sargent, with pleased surprise, as he sprang forward.

"Yes," said she, frankly extending her hand, and giving his a thankful pressure, "and you, and Mr. Sargent, who saved my life. But I shan't try to thank you. You know what I feel. I thought I was dead, and should have been, but for your bravery, and this gentleman," turning to Dick.

"My friend, Mr. Bronson, Miss—"

"Lillian Sinclair," put in Mr. Sargent, who had just appeared, "Whom we expected this evening, but who never does as she is expected to do."

"Yes," continued Miss Sinclair, "I arrived this morning, after you left, and would go to the beach the first thing. You know the rest—but I am all right now, and ready for any amount of sailing, rowing, and swimming, too, though I'll try not to trouble you so again."

That summer, Lillian got all the boating she desired, and was fast learning to sail the yacht herself, and to "talk salt" fearfully.

One breezy afternoon, some time after their first introduction, Lillian and Winthrop, with a juvenile Sargent as an offering to the shrine of propriety, started off on a cruise. Dick was laid up (conveniently) with a sprained ankle.

"'Go (W)in and win,'" said he, laughing, as Sargent left him.

Lillian was at the helm.

"Hard down! let go the jib-sheet there, lively!

"Belay now," cried she in a commanding voice.

In his haste to obey these commands, Sargent failed to look out for his head, and though he escaped with a slight blow from the boom, his hat was knocked overboard, but dexterously caught by the quick hand of Lillian, just as it touched the water. Sargent was about to take it, with thanks, when she drew it back suddenly, saying,

"Wait a minute, Mr. Skipper. You said anything found afloat belonged to the finder, till the owner proved property, and then the finder could claim salvage. So now, pay up."

"Well, what shall it be? But stop, I guess I've a counter claim. About four weeks ago, I had the pleasure to find something adrift, of very great value. Remember? Now, what shall it be, millions for salvage, or—dropping his light manner, advancing nearer, and speaking earnestly,—or, Lillian, may I keep the treasure which—"

"Look out, Win, she'll jibe, and you'll be thrown overboard," piped the innocent youth before the mast. But *she* did not "jibe," and the skipper of the "Bohemian" was blessed with a faithful "first mate."

HOW I KEPT Christmas Among the Asiatics.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MRS. FANNIE R. FEUDGE.

During my Oriental rambles, I chanced to be at Bangkok, the grand, gorgeous capital of Siam, about a month before Christmas. It was just prior to the accession of the late king; and the noble Prince *Chan Fa Noi*, afterwards "Second King," was the recognized "Heir Apparent" to the throne. He lived in courtly magnificence, and entertained with true Oriental hospitality. His splendid palace was beautifully fitted up—most of the apartments in European style, with mirrors from France, paintings from Italy, and fabulous quantities of massive gold and silver plate of the Queen's pattern, that had been ordered expressly for his use from London. The noble Prince, who was a good English scholar and most accomplished gentleman, specially delighted in entertaining the foreigners who visited or resided at the capital; and was also a frequent guest at their houses. I had just returned from a trip to Singapore, bringing back with me a number of pictures and toys that I thought would be likely to interest my little son's play-fellow, the youthful Prince George—the same who is now so worthily reigning as "Second King" of Siam.

Among the drawings were two, finely colored, representing Christmas sports—one of them, a Tree with its myriad of tiny tapers all aglow, and every branch freighted with the precious gifts of this cheery season, while children seemed to dance around, in winsome glee, as they tossed aloft their hats, decorated with evergreens; and so graphic was the portraiture, that one might almost imagine he heard their shouts of joy. The other picture gave the inner view of a dining hall—with its blazing fire of hickory logs, the room decorated with wreaths and arches of evergreens and holly, and the table piled with Christmas luxuries. Prince Chan Fa took the pictures from the hands of his little son, and gazed long and eagerly, evidently trying to decipher their mysteries. At length he turned to me for an explanation, which he had no sooner gained, than he spoke out excitedly, with all the *empressement* of a child over his last new toy: "Why can't we have a Christmas too? When is the time for it? It would be splendid, wouldn't it, to keep Christmas at Bangkok, and have all the Americans and English present. If you will only tell me what is wanted, I will spare neither trouble nor expense to obtain whatever the country affords. But you, my friend, must consent to be *Major Domo*, and give all the orders. I will see that they are executed with all the precision your can desire. Come, say *yes*, and we'll have a grand time. The first Christmas ever celebrated in a Siamese palace. Hurrah for Christmas!" And so he talked on, excitedly, while I was canvassing mentally the pros and cons of the case, and whether it would be possible to get up anything in the way of a Christmas celebration, that would be worthy of the name. I was somewhat doubtful—but finally consented to do my best; and my noble visitor departed, overwhelming me with thanks, and almost beside himself with joy.

The weeks rolled by—laggingly enough said the Prince, who called almost every day, to know if it was time to begin, till but three days grace remained, when I promised to be early the next morning at the palace, to assist in decorating the rooms, superintend the ornamenting of the larger cakes, and put other finishing touches where they were needed. "Don't make it late," were his last words, as he bade me good evening, "there are piles of things waiting your orders." Well knowing the excitable nature of my royal friend, especially where anything new, strange, or foreign was concerned, I arose a full hour before my custom, yet had scarcely commenced my toilet, ere the door bell announced an arrival, and a note from the Prince was sent in, informing me that he had taken the liberty of dispatching his own boat for my use, in order to save time in getting out ours, and that he should wait breakfast for me, in the hope that I would come at once. I had nothing left me but to obey, as speedily as possible. So leaving my own sleeping boy to join me with his father at a later hour, I hurried off; and when twenty minutes rapid pull of the splendid rowers, brought me to the palace, I found His Royal Highness, protected by the shade of an immense umbrella, awaiting me at the wharf. Thanking me for my promptitude, he offered his arm, and conducted me at once to his beautiful breakfast-room, where a sumptuous *dejeuner* was already served, and such tea and coffee as one finds only in the Orient, were hissing in silver urns, and mingling their fragrant aroma with the perfume of the thousand flowers that peeped in at the window and door on every side, with very un-Christmas-like luxuriance. A variety of tempting viands wooed our appetites, but the hour was still early; and though my royal host was all courtesy, and pressed me to eat, we were both too eager to enter upon the arrangements of the day, to give much attention to our tempting little *tête-à-tête* breakfast. Escorted by the Prince to the long range of low buildings devoted to the *cuisine*, I was soon among "the piles of things" that awaited my inspection. And *piles* there certainly were. If the regal host had expected to entertain a hundred or two for each of the thirty guests invited, the provision would have been ample. There were at that time only about thirty Europeans in Bangkok, and *native* nobles could not be entertained, because, according to Siamese etiquette, there was no one in the kingdom of sufficient rank to associate with the princely entertainer, with the two solitary exceptions of the reigning king and the Prince's own elder brother—then High Priest—a few months later, Supreme Ruler of the realm—

who was no other than the late illustrious monarch, *Chou Kî Yei, the father of one of the present youthful sovereigns—Prince George, son of the Christmas entertainer, being the other.* But then there was the enormous household of the Prince—consisting of a hundred or more wives, about a score of children, and thousands of subordinates who were all to be fed, though none of them with the solitary exception of Little Prince George, appeared at the table with the guests, and he only in compliment to my little son.

There was little remaining for me even to direct in the department of the *cuisine*, for there were already huge pyramids of cake, both fruit and plain, all so exquisitely iced and ornamented that I should have deemed it sacrilege to touch them, besides an endless variety of snow-balls, cookies, jumbles, puffs, pastries, &c., all gotten up in the highest style of art. There were fruits—fresh, crystalized, and candied—creams, comfits, jellies, nuts, and confectionary of all sorts and descriptions—more sweets than the entire court ought to have devoured in a month. I learned afterwards that a hundred cooks had been busy, day and night, for about three weeks, preparing delicacies for the entertainment of thirty foreigners; and this not the dinner proper, but *only the dessert*. But this is the way they do things in the East, where a single dinner may consist of twenty courses of two hundred dishes each! The meats and vegetables had not yet been selected; so I made out the bill of fare, gave directions for compounding the English plum-pudding and sauce, and veritable mince pies, so indispensable a portion of the Christmas dinner, and then passed on to the decoration of the rooms. The drawing-rooms came first, then the Prince's own boudoir, which was to be used on this occasion as the ladies' reception room, and a similar one on the opposite side for the gentlemen; but that upon which our chief skill was lavished was the spacious *salle-à-manger*, an elegantly-frescoed saloon, full sixty feet in length. It was hung with long mirrors and fine oil paintings, and lighted by three massive chandeliers of most elaborate design. At one end of the room was a sideboard, so constructed as to appear to be formed entirely of exquisitely carved *ivory*, though of course there was wood underneath to give the needed strength. The top was literally piled with gold and silver plate, from the centre of which rose a clock in the form of a crystal fountain, whose waters were kept in motion by the machinery that moved the wheels of the clock; and several fine jets at each end of the sideboard also sent the water upward, sparkling like ten thousand diamonds, to fall leaping and foaming into marble basins below, where bloomed mammoth water lilies, red, white, blue, and variegated—the *tout ensemble* giving an air of most refreshing coolness to the spacious apartment. In the centre was a long mahogany dining-table, over one end of which the Prince had caused to be unfurled a magnificent British flag—at the other waved our own dear "Stars and Stripes," and in the centre floated, as uniting the others in graceful harmony, the grand national banner of Siam, a white elephant emblazoned on a ground of crimson.

Above and between the flags, we erected lofty arches of evergreen, interminglied with a native berry that strikingly resembles our own holly—wreaths of the same entwined mirrors and pictures, and graceful little mottoes and emblems were interspersed wherever we found room for them. It was indeed a regal-looking apartment worthy of the princely owner; who followed every step of the preparations with untold interest, and was always ready, with his rare taste and skill, either to devise or execute.

At sunset I left him, but returned the next day, the last before Christmas, to complete the preparations for the festival. When I retired on Christmas Eve, everything had been done and well done, except the actual cooking of the Christmas dinner; and as in that department I was really the novice, while the numberless cooks of the establishment were perfectly *au fait* in all the mysteries of the *cuisine*, I did not intend to go up any more till the hour for the company to assemble, which was six P. M. But my noble friend felt uneasy, lest in laying the table, or in other preliminaries, some point of *European* etiquette might be violated, and begged earnestly that I would look in, if but for a moment, before making my toilet for the evening. I did so, and gratified the princely host by assuring him that the arrangements were perfect.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

BURIED ALIVE.

A tradesman of Bristol died, and after a due delay was buried in the family vault of a village church, a few miles from the city. Now, in this case there was not the slightest suspicion that there was any chance of life lingering in the body, but all were satisfied he was dead. On the night of the funeral, however, the widow had a shocking dream, to the effect that her husband had been buried alive, and was trying to break from his coffin; she awoke with the fright, but slept again. Again she dreamed the same dream, and awoke; slept a third time, and a third time dreamed the dream. Dreadfully excited, and believing this to be a supernatural warning, she rose, hastily dressed herself, called upon her foreman, and ordering a horse to be put into a cart, although it was still dark, drove with two or three of her men, provided with tools, to the church. She obtained the keys from the sexton, who, on being thus untimely roused, was disposed to object to the proceeding, but she ordered the men to burst open the doors if he withheld the keys. He yielded, and the party entered the vault. The coffin, of course, was where it had been laid, and in another minute it was wrenched open. The dream was a merciful warning; that man, reader, carried on his business for years afterward in the house from which he had been borne as dead, and men now living in the city knew him.—*Englishwoman's Magazine.*

A WORD FOR NOVELS.

Novels familiarize men's minds with society not confined to any age, country or class. The poorest student treads palace rooms; the seamstress in her garret penetrates into the most exclusive boudoirs. The pauper without a vote takes part in the highest politics of past times. Suggestions of philosophy, of wisdom, clothed with personality, are gradually drunk in; and the reader rises bettered, not taught the most approved kind of drainage of workhouse or lunatic asylum, but so lifted above the meaner thoughts of daily life that on all subjects presented to him he is inspired to take a broad and general view. Man does not live by bread alone, nor by facts alone. We are not all of us statesmen, statisticians or students, careful to read everything on both sides of the question, and to test every assertion. The world is moved by feeling more than by interest or argumentative power; an able novelist may enlist on the side of justice that large force of public feeling which is called the opinion of the day, without which the legislative machine could not be made to move. To lift men up, to make them superior to daily needs, to make them forget animal wants and habitual listlessness, is in itself of the greatest and purest use.

☞ A small braid of gray hair costs from sixty to a hundred dollars, and is much more expensive than the golden hair, which is so much admired.

☞ Chamberlain Bradley, of New York, remarked that a man could not whisper now-a-days without being overheard "by some newspaper cuss who would print the whisper."

DOWN BY THE BROOK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

Out into the brook by the willow trees shaded,
Bordered by cowslips and velvety moss,
Stepping so daintily, Katharine waded,
Holding her bright colored plaid skirts across
One rounded arm, as she walked through the waters,
That splashed o'er her ankles so bare and so brown.
Oh! she was fair as the ocean's nymph daughters,
With her hair half in waves, half in curls hanging down.

And her dark languid eyes looking out 'neath long lashes,
Little she dreamed I was watching her there,
As her tiny brown feet sent the water in splashes
Up to the ends of her long curling hair.
Screened by a huge tree I watched her and waited
Till she stopped on the stone in the midst of the brook,
Just as a fisherman waits till the baited
Innocent fish shall be caught on his hook.

Then I sprang out where the maid could behold me.
"So-ho! fair Katharine! we've met again!
You shall not stir from that rock till you've told me
What I have asked you so often in vain.
No! by the fleecy clouds floating above me,
You shall not step one brown foot on the shore,
Till you have said with your lips that you love me,
And promise to tease and torment me no more."

"I never will say it!" she cried in proud scorning,
Arching her neck in defiance at me.
"Then, Madame Kate, you will stay there till morning;
If you so will it, I'll stay here to see."
Long she defied me, then pouted, then pleaded;
But I was deaf and heard nothing she said.
Her scorn and her tears were alike all unheeded—
And onward, still onward the swift moments sped.

Far fell the shadows across the ripe barley,
Low hung the sun in the red western skies,
And a voice whispered, "I love you, dear Charlie!"
Katie had said it with lips and with eyes.
Then with a bound I leaped into the water,
Dripping and glowing I stood by her side.
Close to my heart with two strong arms I caught her,
Katie my wild rose, my bonny brown bride.

Then to the shore through the water I bore her,
Brushed the bright tears from her soft cheeks away.
"Darling!" I said, bending tenderly o'er her,
"Just one more boon I ask, name the glad day!"
What could she do then but answer me sweetly,
This dear little fish that I caught on my hook.
So was my measure of joy filled completely—
So was my treasure won down by the brook.

BARBARA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY PRESLEY W. MORRIS.

CHAPTER I.

The sun was sinking low in the west. It was half past four o'clock of a September day. Suddenly, the school house door opened, and a flock of merry children rushed out. Away in different directions, laughing and shouting, and pelting each other with leaves and grass, they sped.

But let us go inside. The room is not quite empty, for there, at the teacher's desk, sits a slender female figure. The name of the girl sitting there, idle just at this moment, is Barbara Clyde. Isn't she pretty?

Indeed she is; a delicate, slender blossom as sweet and fair as whom there are but few. Her lips are like crimson berries; her teeth white as pearl; her cheeks are bright with color, seeming ever ready to take its flight, yet ever resting there; her eyes are a tender brown, ever bathed in liquid light; in all, here is a face that is very beautiful.

Barbara Clyde's is a brave young life. This monotonous life of teaching a country school is not suited to her. Yet for five years, ever since she was sixteen, she has followed it.

Brave Barbara! On a golden summer day, a little over five years ago, her father, the village minister, closed his eyes in peaceful death, and a month later the girl's mother followed him. Then it was that Barbara showed her heroism. Besides herself there were left behind two aged persons, these the parents of the dead father, both utterly helpless, so far as providing for themselves was concerned. So Barbara let the burden of taking care of them fall on her youthful shoulders.

There was some consolation. Their home was left to them; around it was a few acres of orchard and meadow. Well for them was it that this was so, else Barbara could never have sustained herself and the two old people. A home! that was a great deal, a very great deal.

Yes, Barbara was a heroine. I do not know that I can point you to a nobler life than hers. Instead of sinking beneath the burden of her grief, she bravely went forward to the performance of her duties. Ah me! the pen of the poet and the novelist have written of love and bravery, but this girl's quiet life is as worthy a theme as any of theirs. It was not a light thing that she who had scarcely borne a burden of a feather's weight in all her young life, should have thrown upon her the care of two lives besides her own. I repeat, "Brave Barbara!"

There was something of weariness expressed in her attitude as she sat by her desk this afternoon. Wherefore not? Barbara was patient enough, truly, but six hours spent with a score of children of all kinds of dispositions will weary any one. The girl could not help being tired, though never a word of complaint would she utter.

It wasn't the mere fact of labor alone that fatigued her. It was its unsuitability. Shutting her up in the narrow walls of the school-room was like confining a bird in a cage. If she could have roamed through forest and field, sketching them, as she delighted to do when she had opportunity, it would have been far better for her; or if she could even have had a class in music, that would have been far preferable, for she loved music with all her heart. But this tedious routine of a country school was irksome to her, more irksome than she would have confessed.

Don't think that the girl pined on account of her lot. Not at all! On the contrary she was generally blithe and cheerful. Can you blame her that on some occasions, like this evening, she was ready to cry out that she could not endure it any longer.

Then, further, she had no companionship suitable to her disposition, gentle and refined as it was. The people of the village were kind enough, but rude and uncultivated in their manners. And her grandparents were old to childishness, so that she could not look to them for companionship. What wonder then that her life seemed void and barren, nought of romance or poetry about it, all hard, dry reality, as it were; a hard battling even for the common comforts of existence. Then I say, blame her not, that sometimes an unexpressed longing came to her for something else than what she had. She deserved that sweetly perfumed flowers should be strewn along her path; instead, there were more thorns than blossoms. Not music and poetry were here, but instead the toilsome drudgery of the school-room was her daily lot.

The sun was not far above the horizon when she went out from the school-house. She took her way along the smooth hard road toward her home, which was in the outskirts of the village. The school-house was, perhaps a quarter of a mile from it. The scene was quite a pretty one; a stretch of orchard and field, with here and there a farm house, while ahead of her the village lay peacefully quiet.

Her spirits grew lighter than they had been, and she began to hum a merry little tune.

She was interrupted by the clatter of horses' hoofs coming down the road. She stopped and looking back, beheld a short distance behind her a party of half a dozen young folks. In a few moments they had overtaken her, and were just passing, when one of the gentlemen dropped his whip. He leaped off instantly and picked it up. Then he bowed to Barbara.

Barbara returned his bow very respectfully, and kept on her way. The gentleman remounted, and the party rode off slowly.

"I believe you did that purposely, Holland," Barbara heard another of the young gentleman say.

"And I too," chimed in the young lady who was riding with the gentleman just speaking.

"Perhaps I did," Holland replied; "at any rate I am well paid for my pains—for by my word, that was as fair a face as ever I looked upon."

Barbara heard no more. She blushed a little resentfully at what she had heard. Then her momentary anger vanished, and she concluded, very philosophically, that if the gentleman wished to consider her pretty, he was welcome to do so. Then she decided that these people must be temporary boarders of Mrs. Comstock's, whose pleasant cottage on the opposite side of the village to her own home, was sometimes the resort of those who sought for a time the pleasures of the country, having left the dust and smoke of the city behind them.

CHAPTER II.

It was Saturday, a holiday for Barbara. The morning was a beautiful one, and she was on her way for a ramble through the fields and into the forest, probably. On, on she went, not caring much whither she should go, till she came to the edge of the woods. Then she stopped and looked about her. Several paths were before her, with all of which she was familiar.

"I will go to the 'Glen,'" she murmured, presently.

Then taking one of the paths she continued to ramble slowly along. After the lapse of some time she reached a very picturesque spot. It was a grassy dell through which flowed a little liquid stream, clear as depths of crystal. The dell was overshadowed by huge trees, whose shade made the place deliciously pleasant and cool.

Barbara seated herself on a stone close by the stream; and taking a book from her pocket, began to read. It was a little blue and gold volume of Tennyson's poems, that she owned. She had read it many times over with a fresh delight. To-day she perused here and there a portion.

At length she let the volume fall into her lap, and her eyes became dreamily fixed on the murmuring brook. The poet spoke of something that she had never realized. Love! oh, love! what knew she of that? The story of "Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat," was all a mystery to her.

Looking all around upon her world there was no Sir Lancelot for her. (I speak of the Lancelot of Elaine, and not of Guinevere.) Then with a shy blush, Barbara wondered if the romance would ever come to her life. The fair young face was troubled as she thought that it might not, as she thought that it seemed very probable that it would not. And that trouble was natural. Oh the human heart is so created that it instinctively pants for love. Would that none should ever be robbed of that sweetest portion.

Barbara sighed. A girl might tell you why she let her eyes fall then on a face, sweetly fair, the image of her own, that was reflected back to her from the brook, I am sure that I cannot. Shall I hazard a guess? Well, she was wondering probably, if the face she saw there was fair enough for her Sir Lancelot to love, if he should ever come. You are saying that "My Barbara is not quite an angel after all."

Indeed she is not. She couldn't help knowing that she was pretty, however. And I may as well add, that there is a certain shy sweet womanly vanity, if you please, that I like.

Barbara lifted her eyes from the water and saw—a gentleman standing ten feet from her. She gave a little cry—of astonishment rather than alarm.

"I wish you a very good-morning, Miss Clyde," said the gentleman, coolly.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Barbara, "but I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance; therefore I cannot call your name."

By this time Barbara was quite as cool as he was.

"My name is Holland," the gentleman returned. I met you in the road the other evening, when I dismounted to get my whip—perhaps you have not forgotten."

"I have not forgotten the occurrence," Barbara replied; "but—"

"Ah! yes, I see," Holland put in as she paused, "but the personage you have."

"Well?"

"I haven't forgotten you?"

"But my name—"

"Oh, I learned it."

Barbara had risen to her feet, causing her book to fall to the ground. She now stooped and picked it up.

"I must go home," she said briefly.

"I am going to the village myself," Mr. Holland said.

And when Barbara started, he walked along by her side. A silence fell between them and continued for some moments. Then he saw the book that she was carrying, and reached out his hand for it.

"May I see it?" he asked.

She gave him the volume.

"So! Tennyson, I see," Holland said. "Elaine and the rest of them. Do you like Tennyson?"

"Yes, sir," Barbara answered.

He opened the volume and read half a dozen extracts in a voice that was very clear and rich. When he had read one or two passages, Barbara looked at him more closely than she had yet done. His was quite a handsome face, with broad white brow, and frank and sparkling gray eyes. Barbara didn't pretend to be a judge of human character, but the face at which she was stealing an occasional glance seemed the index of a pleasant and honorable nature.

"Heigho!" Holland cried when he had read as much as he wished to, "it's all nonsense, I suppose, this love, love, love!"

"Indeed!" said Barbara gravely.

Then Holland gave her back her book, and asked her about her school.

Presently she found herself talking to him in quite an animated manner. And almost before she knew it, they stood at the gate of the vine-covered cottage that was her home.

"I am going to call on you," Holland said, as he stood a moment at the gate. "Can I?"

"No," said Barbara hastily.

A moment later, she added:

"Excuse my rudeness, Mr. Holland. We always try to make every person welcome who comes to the cottage."

"I will bring the most unexceptional of references, as the papers say," he exclaimed, laughingly, as he went away.

He did call one evening, not very long after. He brought a volume of poems along for Barbara to read, as he told her; a magazine also, in which he pointed out a story, and asked her to tell him what she thought of it after she should look over it. He told her he was coming back the next evening to find out what she thought of it.

Barbara read it carefully. When he came the second time he asked her how she liked it.

"It is very sweet and pretty," she answered.

"I am glad to hear you say so," he returned, "for I wrote it."

Barbara wasn't particularly astonished at that, for she had guessed as much. In the course of the evening Mr. Holland asked her if he could not come and take her over to Mrs. Comstock's on the next Saturday afternoon to teach her to play croquet. Barbara hesitated awhile, and finally consented to go.

I hope you haven't received the idea that the Clydes were miserably poor, or anything of the kind, for if you have you are mistaken. The cottage was nicely furnished, and thanks to the few acres around it, brave little Barbara got on very comfortably with her affairs.

On the Saturday afternoon appointed, Mr. Holland escorted her over to Mrs. Comstock's. She met there half a dozen other young people, and enjoyed herself very well. One person to whom she was introduced did not impress her very favorably, or rather the coldness and haughtiness of that person seemed to chill her. The person's name was Miss Caroline Dumont. I may as well tell you that Miss Caroline wanted to marry Mr. Holland, and already rather claimed him for her own. Perhaps she was a little jealous of Barbara. However, Barbara enjoyed herself very well, and when Mr. Holland escorted her back home was scarcely recognizable as the sad little girl whom we beheld in the school-house a few days before, so merry and witty had she become.

And I think it is probable that Mr. Ralph Holland (that's his full name, dear reader,) thought that she was the fairest, and freshest, and sweetest creature that he had ever beheld.

Why shall I dwell here? The romance had come to Barbara Clyde's life at last. During those beautiful autumn days the story that is so old, yet newly told for each one of us, became hers. She learned to love, perhaps unconsciously to herself, yet none the less surely did she learn to love.

CHAPTER III.

Again we see Barbara Clyde in her schoolroom. A month has passed, a month of change for her. Two weeks before Grandpapa Clyde had folded his hands across his peaceful breast, and his soul had winged its flight away from earth. Not very many hours afterwards, she who had sojourned with him for nearly three-score years closed her eyes, and her spirit took flight in search of his. Barbara has dismissed her school for a half holiday, and is sitting alone with her head bowed on her desk. Alone! Aye, doubly alone does the girl feel herself. In all the wide world who is there to care for her?

Then a face floats across her vision, the face of Ralph Holland. And here had been a change for Barbara. She realized that before she had been a child, but now she had become a woman. And she knew her own heart well enough to fully understand what was in it.

I say that across her vision floated the face of Ralph Holland. Did she feel herself any the less alone for that? Indeed no. It only made her feel the more bitterly so. "What could he ever be to her, or she to him?" was the question that she asked herself. He was rich, talented, on the road to fame, and she—why, she was only an ordinary little country girl.

A hot tear fell on her hand. Then she sprang to her feet, a very picture of pride, dashing the tears away from her eyes. Should she weep for a man who no doubt considered her merely as a summer acquaintance, to be forgotten in a day? Then pride dried her eyes, and no sign of weakness was evident about her. A step was coming up the path to the school-house, and shortly a figure appeared in the doorway. It was the figure of Miss Caroline Dumont. Latterly that young lady had affected a great interest in Barbara.

Barbara welcomed her kindly, and gave her a seat, congratulating herself, however, that Miss Dumont had not seen her weeping.

Miss Caroline made herself very agreeable for some time. To be brief, she had come to the school-house with a definite purpose, that purpose a treacherous one, hid beneath a show of friendship.

"Miss Clyde," she said after awhile, "I am very happy. I trust you. Can you guess the cause?"

Barbara looked at her calmly enough, and said:

"I do not know that I can."

Miss Dumont held up a finger with a jeweled ring upon it.

"This explains," she said, in a way that was quite enchanting.

Caroline Dumont could be very pleasant and agreeable when she chose. Barbara felt a dull weight sinking at her heart.

Miss Dumont rose, and stooped over Barbara.

"I cannot help telling you, little Pearl," she continued in a manner of assumed shyness. "He loves me, and I am to be his wife."

Barbara spoke quietly. "I wish you happiness, Miss Dumont, with whoever he may be that loves you."

"It is Mr. Holland," Miss Dumont returned.

The name sank like a dagger into Barbara's heart, but she was a true woman in that she made no sign of the pain there.

And Miss Dumont wondered if she had not made a mistake after all, in supposing that this girl cared aught for Ralph Holland. Wondered if she had not played a higher card than was necessary to win the game. She knew that there was a possibility that it might turn up some time in the future to her discomfort. She knew that, when she was playing it, but considered the risk worth the taking. She knew perfectly well that this shy, modest girl would be very hard to approach by a man whom she should suppose was engaged to another. She understood Barbara Clyde well enough to know that it would require extraordinary circumstances to cause her to betray what had been told her.

Presently Miss Dumont took her leave. She had come with an object, and having accomplished that, she did not care to stay much longer.

Barbara sat still for a long time, and then she mechanically rose, and taking her hat started home. She felt so strangely that she wondered if she was going to die. Poor Barbara! the last ray of brightness and hope seemed struck from her life. She scarcely knew afterwards how she reached home, but reach it she did, and threw herself in the high-backed, old-fashioned rocking chair, in which her grandpapa had died so short a time before.

She sat thinking over the past, with ever that dull pain gnawing at her heart. She saw now, humiliating as it was to confess it to herself, that a hope of being loved by Ralph Holland had sprung up unbidden in her heart. Not utterly without cause had that been, for sometimes his manner had shown much; something had sometimes looked out of his eyes that had fostered that secretly growing hope.

"It was better that matters should be as Miss Dumont had told her they were," she forced herself to say.

"Miss Dumont was beautiful, and rich, and—"

Right there the girl broke down utterly, and with violent sobs she let her head fall into her hands. Oh the world was altogether dark and lonely! Where in all the future could she see a prospect of a single ray of brightness? She had presumed to love Ralph Holland, only to feel in her heart the desolation of despair. Then her pride cried out to her that she must be a woman, and with that thought she raised her head, to behold standing in the doorway—Mr. Ralph Holland himself.

"You here?" she cried, and it seemed to her as if he must be reading her heart—terribly humiliating thought.

"Yes," he answered gently, advancing to her side. "Sweet Barbara, why do you weep?"

She looked at him in astonishment. Why should he, the betrothed of another, address her in that manner?

"Because—" and then in spite of herself there was a fresh burst of sobs.

Ralph Holland's action was decided. He gathered both her hands in his, and exclaimed passionately:

"Barbara, are you lonely? Let me drive away your loneliness. Sweet Barbara, little blossom, I love you; let me kiss away your tears. Brave little heroine, I have been watching you bear your burdens; be my wife and I will be henceforth your strength. Oh, Barbara, hear me say again that I love you; I love you with all my heart."

"Don't you love Miss Dumont?" she cried simply.

"No, no!" he said; "I do not, and never have."

And Barbara believed him, as she had a right to do.

With her hands still prisoned in his, he bent over her till he felt her breath on his lips.

"Barbara, do you love me?" he whispered.

He caught the answer murmured scarcely above her breath:

"Yes."

And the brightness of happiness was shining over Barbara's life.

* * * * *

There was no reason for delay, and they were married within a week.

Miss Dumont had calculated well when she had supposed that Barbara was a dangerous rival, that is, dangerous to her hopes. And her unprincipled falsehood was calculated to serve her purpose well, for if Ralph Holland had not discovered Barbara in that time of weakness, he would have had a great deal of trouble in approaching her on the subject of love. Barbara has never told him of that conversation in the school-house, and probably never will. She is perfectly content to know that he never was engaged to Miss Dumont. So you see, don't you, that Miss Dumont made no miscalculation then? I presume that the woman would not hesitate in doing the same thing again, if she should suppose that it would give her an additional chance of winning a man she wanted to marry.

Aren't you glad that Barbara's romance is a happy one? I know you are saying, "Yes."

Skale the Scout;

OR,

ON THE RED FRONTIERS.

An Indian Story of the Last War with England.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BURR THORNBURY.

CHAPTER XXX.

VARIOUS ADVENTURES.

The scout reached the little cluster of deserted cabins—deserted save by the accidental occupants that might still be there—just as the heavy forest twilight began to give place to positive night. A careful reconnoissance proved that the officer and his medical attendant were still in the place, but that the troopers had departed. The stableman was probably about, though he was not to be seen. Hiram had not yet looked in the stable; the fellow might be there, and if so, quite in the way of the removal of the horse. The scout stole to the latter place, and listening long and carefully, could detect no sound indicating that the man was present. The horse was still there, as an inquiring whinney from the animal itself assured him. The beast was quick to scent a human presence.

"You are lonely, poor fellow," thought Hiram, "left behind here in the woods. You are used to abundant company. From the fact that you are so quick to discover that I am here, I take it for granted your groom is away. Let him beware if he approach me while I am engaged in getting you out."

Thinking which, Skale boldly entered the stable and proceeded to saddle and bridle the animal.

"All's fair in war," muttered Hiram, "and this can't be called a case of horse stealing. Circumstances justify the act entirely. A noble animal is this, and apparently as gentle as he is strong."

He mounted, and was riding away, when a sharp challenge from the direction of the occupied cabin was heard.

"Who goes there?"

No answer was returned, but using his boot-heels for spurs, the scout galloped off down the rough and shadowy road.

The discharge of a musket told him that he had barely escaped an enemy. The bullet whistled harmlessly by. Without further alarm, the spot where Liola and Simon awaited him was reached. It was thought best to proceed at once on their way, as search might be made for the missing animal. Accordingly the young lady was placed before Skale in the saddle, and followed by the elder scout and the prisoner, the journey to the fort was commenced. An hour's riding brought them to the trail of the army, which, even by night, could be followed without difficulty. Moreover, on this broad path there was no danger by night or day of losing the direction.

All went well, and when daylight came many miles had been placed between them and the shores of the Raisin. The morning was bright and genial. The forest was full of the voices of spring—murmuring brooks, twittering birds, gentle airs, and all that in the budding year gives a sense of companionship, even where human presence is not.

Liola felt greatly fatigued, though she did not complain. But the tired expression of her face, her drooping figure, spoke her utter weariness.

"We must rest, Miss Liola," said Skale. "You are almost worn out; and no wonder, with such a strain upon you for so many days. It has its effect even upon us rough rangers sometimes."

"I do, indeed, my good friend, feel very weak. I thought I was stronger. I pray heaven that I become not ill here in the wilderness—a burden upon your hands." She shuddered as she thought of the possibility.

"Speak not so, dear lady," said the generous-hearted scout. "We should not feel ourselves worthy to be called men, if under any circumstances we were thus to regard you. We serve you with patience and gladness, for it is one of the pleasures of our rough life that we are often enabled to assist the weak and suffering. Cheer up, dear lady; all will yet be well. You are very weary, but we will halt till you are rested. Think not of illness—that would indeed be terrible for you. Bear up for a few days, and the friendly fort will shelter you. There you will find the repose you so greatly need."

Liola did not become ill, but so completely exhausted, physically, was she that their journey was of necessity performed by very slow stages. Nothing occurred to interrupt their easy march until they approached the old camping ground of the besiegers. They were almost safe! But a short distance further on floated the flag under the folds of which their dangers and anxieties would at least for a time be over. Alas! the necessary slowness of their return was yet to prove almost fatal. The savages were again gathering around the forest stronghold. Tecumseh and the Prophet had induced their warriors to enter once more upon the war-path. The British had also halted in their retreat, and were contemplating a renewal of the siege.

It was near sunset as our friends, now that their goal seemed nearly won, were hastening forward with new eagerness and elation over the spot where the tents of the besieging army had stood. The ashes of the former camp-fires spotted the ground with patches of blackness. Desolate and dreary was the scene, despite the freshness of nature around. The *debris* of the camp lay scattered about; nothing appeared to have been disturbed since the enemy departed.

"How melancholy!" exclaimed Liola, as they passed the vestiges of the former presence of the foe. "Will we reach the fort to-night, Hiram?"

"I trust so, lady; but first I will go ahead and reconnoitre."

"Have you observed anything that suggests caution?" asked the maiden, anxiously. "We are so near the fort that I should suppose we might go directly forward. Is there danger, do you think?"

"Be not alarmed, Miss Liola," replied the scout, evasively. "Remain in the saddle, and I will soon be back."

The two borderers had indeed noticed certain signs that gave them uneasiness. The extraordinary stillness that reigned seemed to hint of evil, when they felt certain that human beings could not be far away. The Americans surely held the fort—they would not evacuate it—nevertheless not a man had been seen. Hiram and Simon had for hours been expecting, with confidence, to fall in with parties of their comrades, scouting in the vicinity. The absence of friends rendered them suspicious of the presence of enemies.

"Keep a sharp lookout, Simon," enjoined Skale. "I smell red-skins, if ever I did, and you know I have a keen scent that way. I will be absent but a short time, if I am not interfered with. Be not alarmed, Miss Liola," he added to the maiden. "My action is merely precautionary. I will soon return, I trust, with the assurance that it is safe to advance."

He disappeared in the shadowy woods, and Simon and his fair charge waited with considerable anxiety his return. The maiden remained mounted, patting the neck of her horse, which had proved a most tractable and trusty animal, and speaking to him in gentle tones as if he were a human companion.

"Is he not a noble fellow, Simon?" she said to the scout, who was silently admiring both steed and rider.

"He is that thar, and no mistake, Miss Liola. He is one o' them beasts that is less brute nor human. Look at his ears! movin' like a lady's fingers; and his eye, so full o' knowin'. I tell ye, Miss, some hosses is more to be 'spected than a good many men."

"That is very true," she answered in a tone that was full of significance, though she did not glance at the scowling Carleton, who appeared to have taken the words of both as meant for himself. The comparison was indeed derogatory to him, though in justice to the speakers it must be said that they did not intend a personal allusion.

After a few minutes of chatty talk, engaged in more to make the period of Hiram's absence seem briefer, than because of a real desire to converse, a silence followed. A keen apprehension had begun to weigh upon the lady, and Simon Brace also felt the time drag heavily. He had been uneasy from the first. During their conversation, which had of course been carried on in guarded tones, his eyes kept keen watch around, and he unconsciously held his hand to his pistol as if in readiness for an attack. Liola had observed his suppressed anxiety, and her fears were now fully aroused thereby. But she spoke not her concern.

"He is long away," the old man muttered; "he must ha' found something to keep him."

The report of a rifle broke the oppressive silence. It startled fearfully the maiden, but Simon Brace appeared to be expecting it. Another, and another was heard, and then arose the dreadful whoop that announced the presence of a savage foe. Alfred Carleton started in terror, for he knew his danger was almost as great as that of the others. The Indians might butcher him before they discovered that he was a prisoner. A human figure came flying toward them in the gloom. It was Skale.

"Fly, fly for your lives!" he cried. "The red-skins are upon us!

"Fly, Miss Liola," he called, as he came nearer. "Turn to the left and ride for the fort. Some of our own men are out, and they may see you."

"But you and Simon—what will become of you?" she asked, hesitating.

"We can take care of ourselves. Hasten! you have not a moment to lose."

"Oh, Hiram, I cannot leave you thus—I mounted, and you on foot," she said.

"But our chances of escape are good. I will assist Simon in taking care of the prisoner. We cannot leave him here, for the savages will probably slay him as an enemy."

Carleton turned pale as he heard these words.

"Cut my bonds," he cried.

"No; but come with us; we will save you from death," answered Skale. "Fly, lady, I beg of you," he continued, addressing Liola.

A fierce yell announced that the Indians had discovered them. A volley of balls was sent toward the little group. A delay of another moment would prove fatal.

"Bear to the left until you reach the river," directed the younger scout. "The blue-coats are in that quarter, and will see you."

"God bless you both," cried Liola, as she galloped off.

"We shall meet again," returned Skale. "Ride fast, and you are safe."

She was gone like a meteor, the proud steed bearing her grandly away. It was now fully time for the two men to look to their own safety.

The savages were quite near, yelling like demons.

The scouts plunged into the bushes, followed by the terrified Carleton, who feared that he was about to perish at the hands of those he had called his friends and allies. A second discharge of firearms occurred just as the three men gained the covert. The prisoner uttered a cry of pain, and fell forward on his bound hands. The balls that had been sent into the thicket, though flying without aim, had not all proved harmless.

"He is killed!" cried Hiram Skale, hearing that cry of agony.

"No," said Simon, who, with danger to himself, had paused to determine if the wound Carleton had received was probably mortal. He is struck in the leg. We shall have to leave him. The brutes may scalp him—but his fate ought to be hangin'. Push on, Hiram, I'm arter ye—and the Injuns' arter both o' us."

"I don't like the idea of leaving that fellow behind, after all the trouble we've had with him," said Hiram. "The Indians will butcher him, probably—but I wouldn't forsake even an enemy in that way, if it could be helped. Perhaps there's a Providence in it, though. He deserves death—and he might escape us at last, even if we took him to the fort. A regular jail, and a civil trial, followed by a speedy hanging, should be his experience. But let him go. Retribution will find him yet; even though he be spared for the present. Hark! that cry! They have found him!"

"He howls loud fur little reason—the

coward!" said Simon. "That ar wound warn't much, I take it; yet he yells powerful. Maybe he ain't dyin' now."

All this time the scouts had been pushing forward—their enemies behind them, but losing ground, as their lessened cries indicated.

"Do you think the gal will make it, Hiram?" asked the old man, in a tone that told how deeply he was concerned for the fair young being who had sped away in the gathering darkness. "Why did you not mount with her, and guide her to the fort?"

"I thought of that," answered Skale. "But the red-skins were near, and the horse might not carry us both swiftly enough. The lady's sharp and will not miss her way. She knows the lay of the fort and the river. She will meet with some of the rangers. There is one danger though—they may fire upon her in the dusk, not being able to see who it is. And, Simon, we must ourselves be cautious, or we may be taken for enemies, and receive a volley before we can prove the contrary."

At the expiration of half an hour they had made themselves known to and joined their friends. Their first inquiry was for Liola. Nothing had been seen of her. The men were all afoot—not a mounted person had come within their line.

"Heaven help her!" cried Hiram Skale, dismayed and horrified to learn that Liola had not been seen. He had confidently expected that she would fall in with the rangers, the distance was so short and the way so direct. "Has some prowling savage again made her a captive?" he wondered in anguish. "Poor lady! to lose all, when safety seemed so near!"

Hark! through the darkness sounded the trampling of hoofs. A wild whoop at the same moment rose upon the air.

"Down, men, down," ordered the leader of the rangers. "They are coming this way!"

Every man sunk to the earth and waited in silence the approach of pursuers and pursued.

"Is it Miss Liola?" thought the excited scouts—Hiram and Simon. "It must be; who else?"

A horse plunged wildly through the thicket. A dozen stalwart fellows sprang for the bridle-rein. The frantic animal was stopped, but on its back, suffering and groaning, was—not Liola De Verne, but Alfred Carleton! He was bound to the saddle as if it had been the intention of his savage captors, disbelieving, perhaps, his assertions that he was a friend, to convey him in that manner to their camp. Taking sudden fright, the horse had probably bounded away, carrying the wounded and terrified man.

Bitter was the disappointment of the two scouts at this discovery. The safety of Liola was of more account than the capture or recapture of a score of such as Alfred Carleton.

A volley of bullets checked the pursuing savages who seemed eager to overtake their victim—for victim he certainly had been, as his condition, when the rangers came to examine it, fully proved. Blood was streaming down his face—Great heavens! he had been scalped alive! and fearful wounds he bore upon his body. Yet he still breathed; his groans were horrifying. Retribution had indeed overtaken him. Relieving him the little that was possible, the rangers commenced their return to the fort.

Skale and Brace were fearfully loth to abandon the spot, without learning something of the lost maiden.

"I will not give her up," cried the former. "She must not be left to perish."

"But what can be done to-night?" asked the leader of the party. "It is madness to remain. We shall be surrounded. The red-skins are thick on both sides of the river. Come. I dare not expose my command to further peril."

With a mighty grief filling his generous soul the scout followed the retreating rangers. Brave old Simon Brace, equally sorrowful, joined him.

"To-morrer, Hiram, to-morrer," said the latter, "we will start fresh."

"To-morrow may be too late. Yet what, as the Captain says, can we do? We must go back to the fort, I suppose, after our long tramp, without either Miss Liola or the Major. You haven't forgotten him, I hope, Simon?"

"Not ary time, Hiram. I feel powerful bad for both. Lord help the poor gal wherever she be. I'd give my scalp this minute to have her with us."

CHAPTER XXXI.

AN UNSUCCESSFUL AMBUSCADE—WHITE WOLF AGAIN—JOYOUS DISCOVERIES.

It was morning; morning bright and balmy. But the smoke of conflict curled up into the sweet air and the cries of desperate combatants were to be heard. A considerable force of the savages, thinking to draw a reconnoitering party of the Americans into ambush, had been discovered and themselves surrounded and attacked. The struggle was hopeless for the red men, yet they fought with more than their usual courage. No aid could reach them from their comrades, for the scene of this fight was on the right bank of the Maumee, and the whites had ranged themselves along the river, completely cutting off the retreat of their victims and preventing help from reaching them from the other shore. Driven from the spot they had selected for the intended ambuscade, the savages now gathered in their camp, but only to be there assailed with fresh fury by foes in their rear and on their flanks. They were in the centre of a circle of fire.

"Remember Dudley!" was the war cry of the rangers.

"Scalp every red-skin!" was shouted, as they thought of that dreadful day when the brave but rash Kentuckians had perished.

Volley after volley was poured into the midst of the environed savages. At last a furious and final charge was made by the rangers. Nearly every warrior had fallen. A few scattered groups still maintained the fight. Toward one of these a party of the whites, among whom were Hiram Skale and Simon Brace, rushed with yells of triumph. Every brave had fallen, either dead or wounded. The dreadful scalping knife was about to do its bloody work. A chief, desperately wounded, was approached by one of the rangers. The knife of the latter was about to descend upon the head of the savage. Hiram Skale was near. He saw and recognized that fallen form.

"Spare him!" he cried, as he sprang forward and stopped the descending blade. "Spare him! it is White Wolf!"

It was indeed the mysterious chief. His closing eyes looked upward to his preserver. He smiled in token that he understood the deed of mercy.

"Is he dead?" cried Skale in anguish, as he stooped to staunch the streaming blood. "Could I not save his life who more than once saved mine!"

He was not dead, but exhausted from loss of blood. The scout tore aside the covering that hid the wound. The fair white shoulder of the chief was revealed. Skale uttered an exclamation of surprise, and then a cry as of mortal agony. What did it mean?

"Phillips! Carson! help me!" he shouted. "This man must not die. Oh, God! he is my stolen son!"

Two or three of the rangers, surprised at the manner and words of the scout, hastened to assist him.

"A white man!" they exclaimed, simultaneously, as they saw the fair, unpainted skin of the supposed Indian.

"He is my son, I tell you," cried Hiram Skale. "Oh, save him! Call a surgeon! My son, my son! Oh, have I found you but to see you die!" The anguish of the scout was unutterable.

A surgeon came. The ghastly wound was closed and the red tide no longer welled forth. Would it bleed inwardly until the man was dead? Oh, for the sake of Hiram Skale, let life remain!

On the shoulder of the fallen chief was to be seen a *birth-mark* of such peculiar form, that he who bore it must indubitably be known thereby. The son of Skale, long ago stolen and carried into captivity among the savages, had borne upon his person just such a mark. The sight of it was a confirmation of what the scout had felt, but had not dared to utter. The strange instinctive interest that had drawn him toward White Wolf was now explained.

"My son, my son!" groaned the father, bending closer over the wounded form. "My long lost Howard!"

White Wolf was tenderly borne from the field by several of the rangers who had gathered wonderingly around. He revived partly, as he was borne along. Those who were bearing him paused. Very weak, but fully conscious, he startled them by asking:

"Have you found the lady? the lady and the prisoners?"

"He speaks!" exclaimed the overjoyed father. "He may live. What is it that he says? Can Liola be near!"

A familiar figure, escorted by a dozen rejoicing rangers, at this moment approached. A new exclamation of delight broke from the lips of Skale.

"It is Miss Liola! Heaven be praised!"

She came not attended by the soldiers alone; two others were in the group, whose presence appeared to cause great excitement. Indian warriors they seemed to be, yet not treated as prisoners.

"Hiram Skale!" cried one of the latter as he came near. "God bless you, my brave friend. How rejoiced I am to meet you again!"

A look of wonder for a moment showed in the face of the scout. It quickly changed to one of recognition and joy.

"It is the Major! Miss Liola and the Major both before me! Can I believe my senses!"

"I make a very poor Shawnee, Hiram. Ah! that is White Wolf," he suddenly exclaimed, in a tone of alarm and sympathy, as he caught a view of the wounded chief, reposing on the ground.

"Aye," said Skale, to Major Hallowell's bewilderment—"White Wolf, and *my son*—my stolen son, thus strangely recovered. He is fearfully wounded, Major." He turned anxiously and tenderly to the young chief. "But I hope he will not die."

"You say he is your son?" inquired Earnest.

"He is."

"Can it indeed be?" said the young man. "But this is no time nor place for explanation. Miss Liola, Verner, let us go forward."

The excited party immediately started for the fort. With the utmost care the wounded man was removed. The stronghold was reached.

Then followed surprises, greetings, explanations, and rejoicings, such as pen could hardly picture. In the guise of a painted savage, Isabel Westburn found her lover.

"Oh! Earnest, can it really be you," she cried, when the joyous fact was made known to her.

"It is I indeed, dear Isabel, as you will not doubt when this hideous war-paint is removed."

And Isabel met her young friend, Liola De Verne. And the latter was made to comprehend that, disguised as Major Hallowell was, the youth that bore him company was also a white man; and moreover, her own relative.

Hiram Skale was fully assured of the identity of his stolen son.

"Howard!" exclaimed he who had been known as White Wolf. "Howard—I bore that name long, long ago. You are my father! It must be. I was stolen from the settlements, many years since; but I remember the terrible day. My little sister, Nettie—"

"That was her name!" exclaimed the father, rejoicing at this new assurance of the truth of his conclusion.

"What of her?" he asked, suddenly, as a new hope arose.

"Alas!" answered the white chief, "she will never reach your arms. She died ten years ago."

Skale sighed deeply.

"It would be too much happiness to find her also. Thank Heaven, Howard, that you are restored to me. Rest now; you are very weak. You must not die."

"I will live," said the suffering man. "I will live to be your comforter. I will go no more to the Shawnees. I love my tribe—but I must give it up. A father's love is more than all."

He sank back exhausted. And the surgeon forbade further excitement.

"Now, my lady," spoke gallant old Simon Brace, who had been a delighted witness of all these meetings and greetings—himself gladly welcomed back—"now, Miss Liola, Simon wants powerful bad to know which way ye went arter leavin us in the woods. How did ye come to miss the rangers?"

"You shall hear all, my brave friend," answered the maiden. "My adventures after my separation from you were few, but exciting. As I neared the river a band of savages rushed out of a cover upon me—and to escape them, I was forced to turn to the left, away from the spot where Hiram said the rangers would see me. I met a second party of the savages. Your fears were fully justified, for we were almost surrounded by enemies. Neither party of the savages fired upon me, for it was not fully dark, and they saw, I suppose, that I was a woman, and wished to capture me and my horse. The latter would indeed be a prize," she remarked, smilingly.

Simon fully agreed to that—and muttered something about—"Miss Liola being a greater prize."

"I was hemmed in," she continued. "Only the river way was open. The Indians were sure of securing me. But I urged my horse into the water—"

"You brave creeter!" ejaculated the scout, in admiration.

"And he bore me gallantly across; but I escaped one peril only to fall into another. I was captured as I rode up the opposite bank."

"The cowards!" sneered Simon, "to take a gal that way."

"Never mind," resumed Liola. "It was all for the best. I fell into the hands of a party, among whom were some unexpected friends. Two young Shawnee warriors" she said, smiling most meaningly.

"Ah, I see it now," cried Simon. "The Major, there, and the other young man—"

"My Cousin Verner, Simon," said Liola, blushing.

"Yes, yes! I've played Injun myself before now," spoke the old scout. "But I must own that I never war quite so well fixed up as them ar two."

"Well, they were not very highly valued as warriors by their comrades, it seems," continued the maiden; "and had it not been for White Wolf they would have been slain, I fear. They were too kind to *me*. As it was, we were all made prisoners, and remained such till the rangers released us by killing our captors. Is that a true story, Major Hallowell?" she inquired, as she concluded.

"Too modest to be complete," was the answer. "You have not made yourself out half the heroine you were, Miss De Verne."

"Oh, they must imagine the rest," laughed the maiden.

The fair speaker was listened to by all with the deepest interest. Her beauty and her vivacity won all hearts. Verner De Verne, who had, while with her as her fellow-prisoner, fully made the acquaintance of his lovely and long-lost relative, felt his bosom swelling with a feeling stronger than that of admiring friendship, even such as was inspired by the strange and romantic circumstances of their meeting and the discovery of their relationship. He loved already his beautiful cousin.

The joy of these various meetings and explanations must be imagined. Colonel Westburn found in Earnest Hallowell a son—Isabel a lover mourned as dead. Liola in Verner de Verne—a friend and lover Hiram Skale was, perhaps, happiest of all, though every heart deeply rejoiced at the restoration of friends and the happy discovery of Liola's relationship to Verner de Verne, and Skale's to White Wolf. The whole garrison was in a state of elation. This was increased that very hour by the return of Tom Williams and his fellow-scout, though they brought the news that the British were on their way back to renew the siege.

"We have beaten them once and can again!" were the words of the soldiers. "Let them come."

After a few hours had passed a message came to Liola de Verne as she sat in a tent with Isabel Westburn rehearsing her adventures since the two had parted in the British camp.

"Alfred Carleton is dying. He sends for Liola De Verne."

In company with Isabel the maiden went immediately forth.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A CONFESSION.

Reaching the quarters where the suffering man lay, the two ladies were conducted directly to his presence. A fearful spectacle they beheld in the subdued light of the place. Carleton, as we know, was terribly wounded, even the bandages upon his head not entirely concealing the mutilation of his features. But what most shocked his visitors was the expression of terror and remorse expressed therein. He turned feebly and painfully toward Liola as she entered, and said in a broken and choking voice—

"You have come. I am dying, Liola, but before I go I wish to ask your forgiveness for the great and repeated wrongs I have done you."

"You have it, Colonel Carleton. Much as I have suffered at your hands I cannot refuse my pardon of your crimes. But there is One on whom you should call for forgiveness rather than on me. Ask God to pardon you, His mercy is more than mine."

The wretched man shuddered, and a look of hopeless agony showed in his face, as if he feared that his sins were too great to permit a hope of absolution.

"Implore God's mercy on your sinful soul, Alfred Carleton, ere it be too late. Think not of me, but of your welfare hereafter," said the maiden, solemnly.

"Pray for me, Liola, pray for me," cried the dying man. "If you who are the greatest sufferer by my wickedness can ask God to forgive me, He may in mercy listen. I dare not supplicate Him."

"I do pray for you," she said, "and as truly as I forgive you. But your own heart must cry unto Him."

He sighed painfully.

"My breath is going," he said. "I have a confession to make. You must know Liola that you are not a simple forest child, but a member of a high patrician family and heiress to a vast estate."

"I have already learned that," she said very calmly. The sufferer started.

"You knew—you knew, then," he exclaimed with a visible surprise, "that you were not what you were taught to suppose yourself to be?"

"I came into possession of the knowledge only a few hours since."

"In what way?" he asked, wonderingly.

"Through my Cousin Verner de Verne. He was a prisoner among the Indians, and was with the party across the river. The defeat of the savages this morning secured his release."

"Then my confession in the main falls through. It was my hope that what I have told, and was about to tell you, would have been in part an offset to my many deeds of evil. But you are already informed of the main facts. I have done no good in my life, Liola, and even in the hour of my death I am debarred from undoing a portion of the evil."

"You take a strange view of the matter. The spirit of this confession is the same in either case. If it is your desire in this, your dying hour, to perform a righteous act, and in true penitence to confess and undo your guilt, God will accept your action as worthy. Have you anything to say concerning the motive that led to my abduction?" She saw that his strength was failing, and wished the mystery cleared. A glass of spirits was offered him, which he eagerly drank, and then seemed somewhat revived.

"I did not abduct you, Liola, it was my brother's crime. Your father wedded the woman that Anson—my brother—loved, and in revenge, you, the only child of the marriage, were stolen, and hidden with the simple, scholarly couple who call you their foster-daughter.

"My brother, dying, told me of the deed he had done, and implored me to restore you to your parents. But I also for what I thought sufficient reason hated your father, and resolved that he should never see you again, except as my wife. You were heiress to immense wealth. You were much younger than I—hardly more than a child—yet I resolved to marry you and obtain both fortune and revenge. I took you clandestinely from the place you thought was your home—a hired priest performed the mockery of service that made me your pretended husband. I will not speak of the rest. You repelled me and threatened me. I saw you were in deadly earnest, and I feared you. But I hoped to conquer you at last, and take you to your father as my wife. How he would have writhed, for he knew I was what I am—a wretch and a felon. Oh, God! how bitter my wicked life has been!"

He paused, the two girls and the others present—for there were several witnesses of this sad scene—looked upon him in silent horror and pity.

Presently he continued:

"Another person knew that I was an outlaw and murderer—aye, a murderer!" he repeated with a shudder. "Hiram Skale was that other. He was the chief witness against me. I need not tell the whole dark story—I have not strength; suffice it to say that I endeavored to have him removed—assassinated. I succeeded as I thought in my wicked plan. Only one witness remained against me—your father, Liola. I would silence *him* by wedding you. Was it not horrible, devilish?"

He seemed as much horrified as the others at the memory and mention of his crimes.

"Oh, God have mercy on me! My design against Hiram Skale, I found, recently, had not succeeded. But he was a prisoner in our camp. He was in my power; I sent him as I thought to death again. He lived; White Wolf saved him—White Wolf whom I had begun to suspect was his son. Tell him that—tell Hiram Skale that the white chief of the Shawnees is his son."

"He knows it already," spoke one.

"It is well," continued Carleton, in a voice that was now only a husky whisper. "Wickedness has no permanent triumph; my own sad experience is a proof of that. Forgive me, all. Forgive me, Liola, whom I have most wronged. Pray for me now; pray for my sinful soul when this body is dead. You are pure and merciful. God will hear you. It is growing dark; can day be so quickly gone? Pray—"

The whisper ended in a choking, gasping breath; the hands that had in his excitement been extended dropped by his side; the hollow eyes closed; a faint flutter stirred his breast; a shadow passed over the face; and Alfred Carleton was dead.

"God have mercy on his soul," prayed Isabel and Liola, as, shocked and horrified, they passed from the place.

As they approached the hospital-tent they met Hiram Skale, who joyously informed them that there was now a full prospect of his son's recovery. With gladness they heard the news, and congratulated the gallant scout again on the happy event of the morning.

They then spoke of the death of Alfred Carleton.

"He has gone to his account at last—a fearful one it is. May God forgive him for all the evil he has done," said Hiram. "Did he confess his wickedness?"

"Yes, and died truly penitent, I believe, if not hopeful. He referred to his former hatred of you, Hiram, and its cause," said Liola.

"I knew him years ago in Canada. Accident made him my enemy—I was never his."

Liola then narrated, somewhat at length, the confession Carleton had made.

"He has told the truth, vile as it must make him appear," said the scout. "And so you are the daughter of a Canadian gentleman, Miss Liola. I knew there was a mystery about you. Let me congratulate you once more—you have found or will find a father; I a son. Is it not wonderful, Miss Isabel?"

"Most wonderful," answered she. "How joyous for us all were the events of this morning."

They were at this moment joined by Major Hallowell, who heard the words of his betrothed, and assented to them with radiant delight showing in his countenance. He had assumed his proper garb, and though it was admitted that both he and Verner made handsome "braves," in his bright new uniform he was quite as prepossessing. A fresh exchange of greetings and congratulations took place, and then further discussion of the subject of Alfred Carleton's confession followed.

"Why did your abductor not change your name, Liola?" asked Isabel Westburn. "It seems to me without that precaution there was an ever-present danger of the villainy being revealed?"

"I had not thought of that," answered Liola. "It may have been one of those inadvertences which the most cautious evil-doers are continually committing."

"You were buried alive, as may be said, in the heart of the wilderness," spoke Hiram Skale. "Your family dwelt far in the Provinces. There was little danger of any one finding you there in the forest settlement."

"And with my foster-parents, as I will still call them," said Liola. "They lived as retired as monks and nuns. Dear Beaurais! dear Manette! *they* were not accomplices of my abductor. I am sure of that. Simple-hearted and credulous, they believed all that was told them, never thinking to question."

We need not follow our friends in their discussion of this now-explained mystery. All was made clear. Liola De Verne was the daughter of a patrician Canadian, one of the most distinguished of the *habitans* or French-descended population of the Provinces. Her cousin Verner gave her full information of her family. She was pained to learn that she could never receive her mother's embrace—Mrs. De Verne having died years before—but she looked forward fondly to the time when her father's arms would clasp her.

"We are both motherless," whispered Isabel Westburn; "motherless here on earth, but while they wait for us in Heaven, there are hearts below to love us."

It was when they were next alone together that she said this: and Liola trembled with a sweet and swelling gladness as she thought of the handsome and noble Verner. Her cousin he was, yet the ties of consanguinity were not close, and the beautiful girl felt already that there was a stronger feeling than that of friendship springing up in her heart.

Life was opening sweet before her, and with a new and gladsome meaning. As for Isabel, with her lover restored to her, that rude forest stronghold seemed almost an Eden.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE SECOND SIEGE—CONCLUSION.

The second siege of Fort Meigs by the British lasted only for a short time. The defence was maintained as gallantly as at first, and Proctor despaired of compelling the heroic garrison to surrender. His attention was soon turned to Fort Stephenson. This was assailed by the united forces of the British and Indians, but was gallantly and successfully defended by Major Croghan, a young and accomplished officer. General Proctor, at his retreat from Fort Stephenson, returned to Malden. Perry's victory on the lake, followed by the defeat of Proctor and Tecumseh in the battle of the Thames, gave substantial control of the Northwest once more to the Americans. In the latter engagement Tecumseh, the famous chief of the Shawnees, who has been more than once mentioned in our story, was slain.

After the retreat of the British to their own territory our friends, Colonel Philip Westburn and Isabel, Liola and Verner De Verne, and Milly, wife of Tom Williams, were escorted to Cleveland by a detachment of troops whose term of enlistment had expired. Captain Morris and the survivors of the crew of the Helicon also accompanied them. Thus, after their many perils and trials since the wreck, home and safety were reached.

Major Hallowell, taking affectionate leave of his betrothed and his other friends, proceeded to Detroit, where he rejoined his regiment.

White Wolf, or more properly now Howard Skale, quickly and fully recovered, to the joy of his father and of all. Hiram and his son, together with the scouts, Simon Brace, Tom Williams, Job Barnsley and the others, remained with the army until the cessation of hostilities, performing essential service in their old capacity of rangers.

Howard Skale, though so many years of his life had been passed with the Indians, gave up his attachment to his tribe, especially as they could not be induced to fight for, instead of against the Americans. His sympathies had been from the first with our countrymen, and his influence with the Shawnees, which, as a minor chief, we know was great, had been in favor of an alliance with the Americans. His natural humanity revolted at the cruelty he almost daily saw practiced toward captives, and many were the lives he had saved, and much was the suffering he had prevented by his intercession in their behalf. The lives of three of the characters in these pages he saved, or caused to be saved, one of whom miraculously proved to be his own father. The Shawnees mourned their chief as dead, and they never knew that he had not perished, but had been returned to his race and country.

After the conclusion of the war he settled near Detroit, married an excellent woman, and lived a long life of usefulness within the pale of civilization. Hiram Skale never wandered far from the home of his son, which was also *his* home, except to pay annual visits, first to Earnest Hallowell and his lovely and accomplished wife Isabel, and then to Mr. and Mrs. Verner De Verne, in their beautiful Canadian home.

Earnest and Isabel were married immediately after the glad news of peace was proclaimed, and took up their residence in Cleveland, Colonel Westburn joining them in their home. Earnest was then himself a colonel, and nobly had he won the title. Liola De Verne found a noble and loving father, and though she mourned that her mother had not been spared to witness her return from her long captivity, for such practically it was, she found in Verner a husband—kind and good as he was handsome. Beaurais and Manette, the old couple who had unwittingly assisted Alfred Carleton in his wicked scheme, were not forgotten, but brought from their humble home in the forest to the grand old Hall which was the inheritance of their former charge.

Tom Williams and Milly lived as happily together as mortals need, the chief drawback to the latter's felicity being her husband's persistence in the use of the expression "boil my bones!" She never could break him of that.

Simon Brace lived to the age of ninety-four, and died, honored and lamented. His honesty and simple sterling worth made him friends wherever he went.

Captain Morris was not lost sight of. He soon obtained command of another schooner upon the lake, and whenever he visited Cleveland, his nights were passed in the elegant home of the Hallowells, and many a pleasant hour did he there spend, living over his adventures by water and land. He and his entertainers always spoke of the Helicon with an interest that showed how vivid were their recollections of those terrible days of the past with which her name was associated.

Will Bunting returned to his wife and child, only less happy than she. A braver and a better sailor never crossed the lakes, but Will freely acknowledged he was of no account on shore. "Except as a good husband," said his wife. He was one of Captain Morris's crew until the old man forsook the water, and by that time Will himself was commander of a vessel.

Of Martin Spike nothing was ever heard, nor did any one care to hear of him. He was simply a villain, low and vile, and his fate was probably that of such—an unhonored life, and a death that was a relief to the world.

THE END.

A SPRIG OF HOLLY.

I'm getting old; I'm nearly sixty-five years old now, and not the man I was. Well, since I must tell you a story, I'll tell you how a sprig of holly once saved my life.

It must be—let me see—aye, it was nearly forty years ago, that I was travelling through a rather wild part of Ireland. Though I'm well-to-do now, I was but a pig-jobber then, as my father had been before me. I earned a fair living, certainly, but I had to work for it. I bought pigs at nearly all the fairs in Ireland, shipped them for Liverpool, and made a small profit on each shipment.

It was somewhere about Christmas time, and unusually severe weather. (We had quite different winters forty years ago to what we have now.) I was on my way to Cork, to buy a lot of forty or fifty pigs, and the snow lay so thick on the ground that the crossways were dangerous, and I was compelled to stop for a day and a night at a sort of hostelry, half shebeen, half inn. There wasn't a human habitation about it for a circle of four or five miles, except the wretched huts of the peasantry. It had the strange sign of the Garden of Eden, although it stood in a wilderness, surrounded by morasses filled with dangerous bogs and peat-holes. The landlord's name was Patrick O'Fea, and he was a widower, with one daughter, who helped him to retail his whisky to such of the wild "boys" around as could furnish the halfpence first. Norah O'Fea was what some folks would have called a "downright pretty colleen." But I never fancied her. She was handsome, certainly—straight and tall as a poplar, with (as nearly all Irish women have) very beautiful black hair. However, there was a cold, restless glitter in her eyes that reminded me of a snake. I don't know if you ever saw a viper in a peat-moss, gliding away with an angry stare at you, when you have disturbed it with a stick. Well, that is exactly the look that was in Norah O'Fea's eyes.

I had arrived at the Garden of Eden about six o'clock in the day, but it might have been two hours after when I was sitting at a meal of bacon and eggs in the parlor (they dignified it by that name) of the inn. O'Fea was then absent at a wake several miles off, and not expected home till the morrow or the day after that. So the whole management of the business fell upon Norah.

The room was really rather a good one, partly like an English tap-room, and partly like a kitchen. It had a sanded floor, and several little wooden tables stood in different parts of it, each with a spittoon underneath it, and tobacco and pipes ready on it—just, in fact, as you may see in the tap-room of any English country public-house.

At one end of the room was a large, old-fashioned fire-place, at which Norah O'Fea was carrying on the culinary business. Besides myself—I sat alone at one of the little tables—there were three or four customers at the other end of the room—some drinking whisky and smoking; others, like myself, making an evening meal. They seemed to be of the superior class of tenantry, and one, I fancied, was a drover, also, as well as I.

Well, I had finished my supper—which I must say I enjoyed heartily—and I was taking a whiff at my pipe, with an occasional sip of downright genuine Irish whisky-and-water—whisky that brought the tears to your eyes, and almost took away your breath—when the door opened, and in came a stout, thick-set young fellow with an enormous shillelah, who immediately made himself very much at home. He had a bullet-shaped head, and such deeply-set eyes, and there was an extremely disagreeable, overbearing way with him, which reminded one of a swaggering prize fighter, for all prize fighters swagger, you know.

Norah O'Fea took no notice of the new-comer, who took his seat at one of the tables, and helped himself to whisky, as if the whole place belonged to him. Presently, when the young woman had finished her cooking, she advanced towards her visitor—he was at the next table to mine, and I could hear all they said—and wished him good evening; and indeed, it was evident from the manner of both that they were engaged lovers.

"Anything in our line?" he asked her at length.

"Whist, Dennis dear," she said, casting a side glance round. "Sure, father told me before he went to give ye this."

She produced a large, square letter, written in a sprawling hand, on a coarse blue paper, and fastened with a common red wafer.

The young man perused it hastily, and a gleam of satisfaction lit up his bull-dog-like face. I felt that he took a stealthy glance at me, but I feigned to be busily engaged in mixing my whisky-and-water.

At last, after a few lover-like passages between the pair—such a pair!—the young man departed, and I, wearied out by the fatigues of the day, desired to be shown up at once to where I was to sleep. Much to my surprise, Norah O'Fea demanded payment for my supper.

"I will pay all together in the morning," said I, astonished at the request.

But she insisted, and declared it was the rule of the inn that every customer should pay at once for all he had. I felt embarrassed as I remembered that, except a few coppers, I had no small change. I had fifty pounds in my pocket-book to pay for my pigs, but I did not care about exhibiting the bank-notes in what I had now a right to consider questionable company. However, the young woman persisted in so vixenish and determined a manner that there was no help for it. I pulled out my pocket-book.

"You may see," said I, "that I have only bank-notes, so your reckoning is safe."

She coolly took out one of the notes, examined it, and finding it perfectly genuine, returned it to me.

"Very well," she remarked. "Now I am satisfied. Come this way."

And she led me to the apartment where I was to sleep, and giving me a light, left me.

It was a loft rather than a room, but of small dimensions. Still, it was not uncomfortable; and what pleased as well as surprised me was to find a good fire burning. I scarcely expected that so much regard would be paid to the comfort of a chance customer. What did not appear so comfortable to me was, that in the door of the room—if room it could be called—there was a large cleft, as if it had had a piece cut out by a hatchet, and through which I fancied the cold air must penetrate.

Lying in my small bed, which faced this door, I could see through the aperture on to the stairs outside, at the head of which stood a large, old-fashioned clock, which kept up a perpetual, but not unpleasant, ticking. It seemed, at most, like company in that lonely place; but as I lay in bed I could distinctly watch the hands of the clock slowly continuing their round, for the glow of the peat fire shot a light upon its face. I had lain thus about an hour, and had replenished my fire from a basket of peats, which stood beside the hearth, and crept back into bed. I had not the least inclination to sleep. I experienced that wakefulness which all of you have probably experienced when in a strange place.

Whilst thus I lay musing, and watching the hands of the clock—it was just eleven o'clock—I heard a slight, stealthy step on the stairs, and almost immediately a face presented itself at the aperture in my door. I had the presence of mind to feign sleep, but I could see what was going on with my slightly-opened eyelids.

The face was the face of Norah O'Fea.

After she had looked in, she applied her ear to the gap in the door, and listened intently. Satisfied, apparently, by my regular breathing, that I was fast asleep, she advanced to the clock, and stuck before its face a great branch of yew. Then she departed.

I felt as if I must be dreaming. What could bring a young woman out of her bed in the middle of the night to ornament a clock? My room, the room below, and the passage itself, were already garnished for Christmas with an abundance of evergreens—holly, mistletoe, bay, ivy, and yew. Could she be walking in her sleep? The thing appeared to me to be strange; and if I had felt little inclination for sleep previously, I now felt less than ever.

So I lay on, watching the clock, and wondering what all this might mean, when suddenly an irresistible impulse came upon me.

You must all know what it is to be seized occasionally by some strong impulse to do a thing apparently trivial in itself—as, for example, to touch a particular post in passing down a street, or to turn over a certain number of leaves in a book, or, it may be, to turn down a particular street not in your direct way. If you have not experienced this, you are different from myself, and no words of mine can make you understand my feelings.

Well, the impulse that came over me was to take out the sprig of yew which Norah O'Fea had fastened over the clock, and to replace it by a sprig of holly.

I glanced, by the light of my peat fire, around my room, and saw the very thing for my purpose.

Over an old-fashioned worsted-work sampler—framed and glazed, as some great work of art—hung a most glorious sprig of holly. It was literally covered with bright scarlet berries.

Taking this sprig, I withdrew the branch of yew from the clock, and placed the holly in its place.

To this day I cannot tell why, but as I crept back to my bed, I experienced a strange thrill of satisfaction, as if I had done some very wise and clever thing.

Another hour might have passed away, and I was still lying awake, ruminating on this strange occurrence, when a second time I heard a footstep on the stairs. This time it was a heavier one than before, and though I closed my eyes and feigned sleep as previously, it was with a beating heart, and in no little consternation. Through my eyelids I took care to see who this fresh intruder might be. To my horror, it was the bullet-headed young giant who had received the letter from Norah O'Fea.

My suspense did not last long. He glanced in at me from the cleft in the door with a scowl that made my blood run cold. Then he glanced up at the clock, and with a savage oath of disappointment, departed down the staircase as stealthily as he had ascended.

What could all this mean?

You may be sure I did not close my eyes in sleep that night. I resolved, no matter how severe the weather, to leave these strange quarters in the morning.

With the earliest dawn I was astir, and naturally looked at the old clock with some curiosity.

I had no sooner opened my door than my eyes fell upon a letter, lying on the floor at my feet. It was the coarse blue letter which I had seen Norah O'Fea hand to her sweetheart on the previous evening. I will leave you to judge what my feelings were when I perused its contents, which were as follows—I do not give it in the exact language of the illiterate writer:—

"*Dennis, if any of them cattle-dealing codgers comes here on their way to Cork, and wants spiking, Norah 'll find out, as I'm going to Tim Malone's wake. If there's anything to be done, she will put a branch of yew in front of the old clock. If not, a branch of holly.*

This, then, was the mystery: the yew signified that I was to be robbed—probably murdered, as my body could be easily hidden away in any of the bog-holes that surrounded this Garden of Eden. And who would make inquiries after an insignificant pig-jobber? Thus, my instinctive impulse to replace the yew by the holly—not by the bay, the ivy, or the mistletoe, remember, although there were plenty of all of these around—in all probability saved my life. You may be quite certain I lost no time in forwarding my own expulsion from this Garden of Eden. I did not scruple to steal away without paying my reckoning. Would you have scrupled, gentlemen? I could see now why Norah wanted to ascertain what my pocket-book contained. I never stopped—knee-deep in snow—till I reached the nearest town, whence I proceeded to Cork. I bought my pigs cheaply, and sold them well. From that time I throve, and I am now a man of substance. But that I am alive at all, I shall always believe is entirely owing to that sprig of holly.

A. H. B.

☞ A proposition to light the streets of an Indiana "city" was opposed by the Common Council, on the ground that thieves would be enabled to see when they were watched, and consequently it would be impossible to catch them.

☞ Bloggs had his nose pulled, and was asked by a friend to resent it. He said he would, next week.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

BRUTAL ASSAULT BY A NEGRO.

GREAT EXCITEMENT IN ROCHESTER, NEW YORK. THE PRISONER SENTENCED TO TWENTY YEARS HARD LABOR IN AUBURN STATE PRISON.

In Rochester, New York, on Saturday, December 30, a colored man named Howard outrageously assaulted a little girl, ten years old, and was lodged in jail.

On Jan. 2, the little girl was reported in a precarious condition, and tremendous excitement ensued among the people. The mob attempted to break into the jail for the purpose of lynching the prisoner, but were prevented by the military and police. Some of the afternoon papers announced that the girl had died, and the excitement continued with increasing violence until about nine o'clock in the evening, when it culminated in an attempt to stone the militia assembled, who fired upon the crowd in the neighborhood of the jail, killing two men and wounding a man and boy.

Through the night every body in the city seemed to be moving towards the jail, and the feeling against the military was intense.

The next day notwithstanding the fact that Howard was indicted, the mob did not seem disposed to abandon the vicinity of the jail in which he was incarcerated. The police charged and dispersed the riotous assemblage late in the afternoon, and during the evening people were not allowed to loiter on the streets, the members of the military organization doing duty as special policemen. One man, Rockwell, who knocked a soldier down, was sent to the penitentiary for six months.

On the night of Thursday Jan. 4, Howard was secretly conveyed to the Court-room, and at 9.30 was arraigned and pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to twenty years at hard labor in Auburn State Prison. He was immediately removed quietly and taken to Auburn, where he commenced his term of imprisonment the next day. Thus the authorities satisfied the ends of justice.

The little girl Ochs is reported to be improving.

MOVEMENTS OF ALEXIS.

HIS VISITS CHICAGO AND MILWAUKEE—MAKES NEW YEAR'S CALLS—WITNESSES HOG KILLING, AND TRIES HIS HAND AT PIGEON SHOOTING—ATTENDS A GRAND BALL, AND GETS READY FOR HIS BUFFALO HUNT.

The Grand Duke Alexis and suite arrived at Chicago Dec. 30, at 8.40 P.M. They were met at Calumet station by a committee headed by General Sheridan, and were escorted to the Tremont House, where a more formal reception took place. The Grand Duke was introduced to Mayor Medill, who, in a speech, tendered him a cordial welcome, and offered all the hospitalities in his power. He regretted that they were not commensurate with his feelings and desires, and begged Alexis to overlook any deficiency in his entertainment, and take the will for the deed. The Mayor invited Alexis to visit Chicago four years hence, during the centennial jubilee, when Chicago will have recovered her former greatness.

To this address the Grand Duke replied in a few well-chosen and cordial words. A general introduction then took place, after which the Duke and party retired.

On Monday, New Year's Day, he made a number of calls in company with General Sheridan, visited the stock-yards, and witnessed hog-killing in the largest slaughter-house in the United States. He then went to a pigeon-shooting match, and tried his hand at "trap" shooting, killing twenty-three out of thirty birds sprung from the trap at twenty-one paces.

On Tuesday he visited the burned districts and the Board of Trade, and in the afternoon left for Milwaukee, where he met with an enthusiastic welcome. On the night of the 3d of January that city gave him a grand ball at the Newhall House. The distinguished guest led the first quadrille with Mrs. Governor Washburn, the second with Mrs. Governor Fairchild, and the third with Miss Ludington, the Mayor's daughter.

At ten o'clock the next morning the ducal party left for Chicago again, where they arrived about noon. In the afternoon he indulged in another pigeon-shooting at Dexter Park, and in the evening had a reception at the Tremont House.

Gen. Sheridan's arrangements for Alexis's grand buffalo hunt are now fully completed. The party will proceed to North Platte Station on a ducal train, where all the servants will be left during the absence of the party on the hunt, which will take them from the railway some six or eight days.

It is the intention of all those who go to the hunting ground to take up the military mode of life and dispense with luxuries—servants, carriages, etc. The journey between North Platte Station and the buffalo region will be made on horseback and in ambulances, and the Russians will be treated to a specimen of roughing it in winter on the Plains.

PENNSYLVANIA.

A FAMILY NARROWLY ESCAPES DEATH BY SUFFOCATION FROM COAL GAS.

HARRISBURG, Jan. 1.—In one of the houses comprising Seible's row, on South street, below Filbert, in this city, five persons were almost suffocated early yesterday morning by gas escaping from an ordinary cooking stove. The occupants of the building are Mark Blitz and wife, and Flora, a little daughter, and Guiseppe Pompiloni and wife. On Saturday night when the family retired, about ten o'clock, they neglected to take the necessary precaution—opening the damper in the pipe. The stove is on the first story and the sleeping apartment on the second, a door with a transom communicating with the stairs. The transom was left open, and the gas reached the room through it.

Shortly after retiring the little girl was seized with terrible pains in the head, and vomited freely. Her father thought it was the effect of an overloaded stomach, and consequently did not have any apprehensions of serious results. About one o'clock in the morning Mrs. Pompiloni was similarly affected, and a short time after Mrs. Blitz, Mr. Blitz and Mr. Pompiloni. Between four and five o'clock the entire family were unable to articulate, and moved about with the greatest difficulty. Several were prostrate on the floor. The terrible impression fixed itself on the minds of the family that they had been poisoned in some manner, and their misery became intolerable.

Mrs. Pompiloni, in the faint hope that assistance might be obtained, knocked against the wall dividing the house from Police Officer Kelly's residence, and after repeating the operation several times, Mrs. Kelly and other neighbors came to the rescue, but the doors being locked, they were unable to gain access to the house. Mr. Blitz, appreciating the necessity of help, crawled down stairs and unlocked the kitchen door, but he had scarcely accomplished it before he fell from exhaustion. One of the neighbors had the presence of mind to throw open the windows and admit air. Medical attendance was promptly secured, and the necessary remedial agents being applied, all of the victims now appear to be in a fair way of recovery, though they may, for several days, experience the ill effects of the gas.

UTAH.

BRIGHAM YOUNG AGAIN IN CUSTODY.

Brigham Young was arrested at his residence in Salt Lake City, on January 3d., by the United States Marshal, on a charge of murder. Application was made for his release on bail before Judge McKean. The court-room was crowded to suffocation, and much excitement was manifested among the Mormons, but no disorder. Judge McKean declined to admit him to bail—but would accept the tender of one of Brigham's houses to be used as his jail. This offer was accepted—and the Mormon Governor is now a prisoner in his own residence, on South Temple street.

He is perfectly quiet, and apparently not at all discontented. He receives visitors daily, and says his health is very good, and he has no anxiety as to the result of his trial. He says God will protect and vindicate him, as He always has.

His enemies and those of his people must fall before the Lord. It is probable that the trial will be postponed from the 9th of January, unless some immediate provision is made at Washington for the expense of securing witnesses, &c. The Marshal and other officers are exhausted, and all other private means used.

ILLINOIS.

A YOUTHFUL MURDERER HANGED.

PITTSFIELD, Dec. 30.—Bartholomew Barnes was hanged here yesterday, for the murder of John Grisham, in Calhoun County, in February last. The prisoner was only 19 years old. He was taken from his cell to the gallows at two o'clock, and made a few remarks, stating that he killed Grisham, but did not mean to do it; that whisky was the cause. The noose was put around his neck, and the drop fell at half-past two. He fell five feet, and his neck was broken, producing death almost instantaneously.

THE BOY-EXECUTIONS IN HAVANA.—The State Department has official advices showing that the recent executions of the boy students at Havana, was the most infamous crime of the present age. Several of the boys shot were not in the cemetery, and their selection for murder by lot made patent the fact that there is no government in Havana except that of a mob.

THE CRUELTY OF PIGEON SHOOTING.—The pigeon shooting match of the Long Island Shooting Club was interrupted the other day by Mr. Bergh. A member shot two birds, however, to enable Mr. Bergh to make a test case in the courts. The society, on the other hand, threaten to sue Bergh for trespassing on the club grounds.

FATAL LEAP BY A YOUNG LADY.—The Boston Traveller of December 21, says: "Last night, between nine and ten o'clock, Elizabeth Monroe, daughter of Harris Monroe, residing on Warren street, Woburn, in a temporary fit of insanity, caused by severe sickness, jumped from an attic window to the ground, a distance of twenty-five feet. She struck upon her head, and lived but a few minutes after being taken up. Her right arm was broken and the side of her head terribly crushed. She had been ill for some time with typhoid fever, but was supposed to be in a state of convalescence. Her mother had just left the bedside to attend to a call from her father, who was sick in an adjoining apartment, when she arose, threw a shawl over her shoulders, ran up stairs to the attic, and committed the fatal act. Miss Monroe was twenty-five years old.

ITEMS.

The Grand Duke Alexis was the victim of the Niagara Falls hotel keepers. One day's board for himself and suite cost just $1,500.

A Mormon fold numbering half a hundred sheep is reported to exist in New Providence, Clark county, Indiana.

The recent Indian depredations in Texas, near Laredo, are proved to have been committed by Kickapoo Indians from Mexico.

Two young ladies corrected a Jacksonville, Fla., youth with a cowhide.

Since the expulsion of the students from the Naval Academy at Annapolis, the practice of hazing has totally ceased.

At Chambersburg, Pa., on Wednesday night, a young man named Wm. L. Phillips, from Lewisburg, committed suicide by shooting himself in a store where he was pretending to purchase a pistol.

Catharine Goeble, aged 29, committed suicide by hanging herself in a stable at Lancaster. She was unmarried, and partially deranged.

FOREIGN NEWS.

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE PRINCE OF WALES' HEALTH STILL IMPROVING.

LONDON, Jan. 4.—A despatch from Sandringham reports the continued improvement of the Prince of Wales. The feverishness with which he has been troubled at night is, to a great degree, subsiding, and the temperature of his system in the daytime is that of perfect health. His appetite continues good.

A SENSATIONAL STORY OF THE PRINCE OF WALES.

The New York Herald publishes a London letter, in which it is stated that the writer is informed, on the authority of one who is well posted regarding the secret societies of Europe, that the Prince of Wales was not suffering from typhoid fever, but from an attempted assassination by poison by a secret agent of the International Society. This organization, it is said, has resolved upon the death of the Prince, and the public assertions of some of its members are urged as a corroboration of the fact. The Herald editorially declines to endorse the story.

STORMY WEATHER IN FOREIGN SEAS.

A gale of fearful magnitude has just swept the seas adjacent to the shores of Europe. Near Falmouth, a ship foundered on Saturday, Dec. 30, carrying down all on board. In the Caspian, the Russian steamer Kuma was overwhelmed by the wind and waves in a terrible storm on Friday. All on board, passengers, officers and crew, perished. There was on this ill-fated ship $750,000 in treasure. It is to be feared that further foreign advices will multiply the number of the sad ravages of the recent violent winter storms along the sea-coasts of the old world.

STARVATION OF AN EXPLORING EXPEDITION.

A Cairo (Egypt) letter of December 1st to New York mentions a report current there that Sir Samuel Baker and 700 of his men, who were exploring Central Africa and the head-waters of the Nile, have died of starvation. One report states that the men mutinied and shot Baker. Another report states that only Baker and his wife are left of the expedition.

A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT IN IRELAND.

A frightful calamity has fallen upon the humble town of Kittyclogher, Leitrim, Ireland. In the Court-House of that place, while an interesting trial was in progress, and the building crowded with spectators, the floor gave way, precipitating three hundred persons a distance of thirty or forty feet. Many were killed and more were fatally injured; the exact number is not furnished by our cable despatches. This terrible accident bears a close resemblance to the Court-House horror which threw Richmond, Virginia into mourning two years ago. In this rapid, bustling country of ours, architectural blunders, amounting to crimes, are readily condoned on the plea of haste. But in the more staid Old World greater care and circumspection in the construction of buildings designed for the accommodation of large numbers of people is expected. The defect which led to the fearful accident in Leitrim, will, no doubt, be carefully studied, and in the future avoided by architects on both sides of the water.

RUSSIA.

THE NATION PLEASED WITH AMERICAN HOSPITALITY.

The Journal de St. Petersburg, official organ, says the cordial reception of the Grand Duke Alexis in the United States creates a profound sense of satisfaction throughout Russia. The existing relations between the two countries, strengthened by the noble hospitality with which the son of the emperor has been received, are now, more than ever, a pledge of enduring amity, which cannot but contribute to the general peace and progress of humanity.

ASIA.

LONDON, January 4.—Official advices from Ispahan show that the famine in Persia continues, and suffering and desolation are undiminished. Entire districts of that country are depopulated, and the distress in the cities is terrible. The efforts of the government to afford relief are unavailing.

ITEMS.

The gold yield of Australia is increasing.

A Yankee runs a steamboat on the Ganges.

The Marquis and Marchioness of Lorne have left England.

The sale of the photographs of the executed Communists has been forbidden by the authorities of France.

Visitors in northern Italy complain of unusual snow.

The smallpox prevails to such an extent in many parts of England as to excite great alarm.

A curiously indorsed letter was received at the Chelmsford, England, Post-office the other day. It is addressed "To the handsomest unmarried blonde lady, not twenty-five years of age, in Chelmsford: Postmaster to be umpire," and bears the Boston (U. S.) post-mark.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Connecticut has a canary bird that waltzes.

☞ Mrs. Mary Clemmer Ames says that the hands of Alexis "are simply huge."

☞ A young lady sends us this: How to prevent chappy cheeks. Have nothing to do with cheeky chaps.

☞ A Kentucky girl "don't low no fellers 'round her that hain't rid in the keers."

☞ A Florida three-year-old has a heavy beard.

☞ "The dying Prince hat" is among the latest conceits of the Cincinnati hat manufacturers.

☞ The young ladies of Council Bluffs, Iowa, were to inaugurate leap year by making all the calls New Year's Day.

☞ "Ah!" mused Smith, as he contemplated his extensive collection of New Year's bills, "How true it is that in the midst of life we are in debt."

☞ An exchange says that the new style of collar for gentlemen is simply terrific. They are an economical article, however, as with moderately long pantaloons they do away with all necessity for a shirt.

☞ A letter writer, describing a ball, says the feature which made the deepest impression on him was the "unusual number of very plump women foaming over the tops of their dresses."

☞ Whenever a man goes home and sees through the window another man with his wife, the papers call the first chap Enoch Arden. But it is quite hard on Arden.

☞ A young Indianan "proposed" to six young ladies just for fun, and was considerably annoyed by being accepted by all of them.

☞ A Western Journal offers this inducement. "All subscribers paying in advance will be entitled to a first-class obituary notice in case of death."

☞ You talk of your troubles, but yours is not such a hard case as mine, as the oyster said to the fisherman.

☞ "Devil's Delight" is a pleasant Kansas village.

☞ The "census," it is said, embraces seventeen million women. Who wouldn't be a census?

☞ A band of female counterfeiters has been broken up in Illinois.

☞ A Swede named Larsen is said to be the best billiard player in Europe.

☞ The editor of the Chicago Post tells this: "What would you do if mamma should die?" asked a lady, with whom we have the honor of an intimate acquaintance, of a little three-year-old girl that we wouldn't take a hundred dollars for. "Well, mamma, was the melancholy response, "I s'pose I should have to spank myself!"

☞ A Rhode Island man has been arrested by two railroads for attempts to obstruct their tracks. His excuse was that he had to take a log of wood home, and if the state is not big enough for him to lay down a log in it without blocking up all the railroads, the fault lies with somebody besides him.

☞ At the show of cats in the Crystal Palace in London, the first week of December, there was a pure tortoise-shell tom-cat without a white hair on him. Another cat with blue eyes excited great attention.

I've caught a cold—
I don't know how;
I go "k-chu-z!"
When I "k-chow!"
And when I try
Like a Chinee,
To say "p-ktz!"
I say "s-chee!"

☞ An Indianian, who hadn't a whole pair of boots or trowsers, received three silk hats as presents at Christmas.

☞ The Stark County (Ind.) Ledger welcomes a new comer to the town of Knox after this fashion:—"Miss Betsy Opplebach intends locating in this place soon. She is intelligent, and handsome, and don't smoke, chew tobacco, drink whisky, paint, 'play sweet,' wear false 'dumplings,' or chignons—is opposed to woman suffrage, free love, and things that squeeze her out of shape. She is not on the marry, and will entertain no propositions. Her card announcing her biz will appear in our columns when she arrives."

☞ There is only one woman in the Iowa State Penitentiary.

☞ After all, what is more harrowing to the sole than a peg in one's boot.

☞ A lady, some time back, at the British Museum, asked if they had a skull of Oliver Cromwell. Being answered in the negative—"Dear me," said she, "that's very strange—for they have one at Oxford."

☞ When a Connecticut deacon nudged a somnolent worshipper with the subscription box, the sleepy individual awoke partially, smiled, murmured, "I don't smoke," and dropped off again.

☞ In New York last year 1,314 persons came to violent deaths. 851 were by explosions and other accidents; 179 were drowned; 126 were the corpses of infants found in the streets, &c.; 108 were suicides; and 46 homicides. Of all these violent deaths, but one was by judicial hanging for murder.

☞ Jenkins, an old whisky bloat, had a son the other day. The nurse put his first-born in his arms, and Jenkins, regarding it lovingly while a tear trickled down his grog-be-blossomed nose, said:—"Twenty years hence he will keep me in whisky."

☞ The London Court Journal is responsible for this item of fashionable intelligence: "A nice little order has been executed for an American lady of fashion, and has just been shipped, *viâ* Liverpool, for New York, namely, a case of fans of the value of £7,764 ($38,820)! They are of course studded with gems of great value.

☞ A demure-looking chap hailed a charcoal peddler with the query, "Have you got charcoal in your wagon?" "Yes, sir," said the expectant driver, stopping his horses. "That's right," observed the demure chap, with an approving nod; "always tell the truth and people will respect you!" and he hurried on, much to the regret of the peddler, who was getting out of the wagon to look for a brick.

☞ One dollar and a half for regular customers is the latest quotation of wedding fees in Indiana.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

SINGULAR CREATURES, AND HOW THEY WERE FOUND: Being Stories and Studies from the Domestic Zoology of a Scotch Parish. By Mrs. GEORGE CUPPLES, author of "The Little Captain," "Driven to Sea," "Miss Matty," &c. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER. A Novel. By EDWARD EGGLESTON. With Twenty-nine Illustrations. Published by Orange Judd & Co., 245 Broadway, New York; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada.

LANDMARKS AND OTHER POEMS. By JOHN JAMES PIATT. Published by Hurd & Houghton, New York; and also for sale by Porter & Coates, Philada. The leading poem in this volume, "The Lost Farm," as well as several others, will have a peculiar interest to Western readers as illustrating phases of life which that part of the country has gone through in its growth during the last fifty years.

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY for January, 1872, contains "Lady Wentworth," by Henry W. Longfellow; "Septimus Felton," by Nathaniel Hawthorne; "The Guests of Night," by Bayard Taylor; "Myths of the Barbaric World," by John Fiske; "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," by Oliver Wendell Holmes; and other first class reading matter. Published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston.

CLOUD PICTURES. 1. "The Exile of Von Adelstein's Soul." 2. "Topankalon." 3. "Herr Regenbogen's Concert." 4. "A Great Organ Prelude." By Francis H. Underwood. Published by Lee & Shepard, Boston; Lee, Shepard & Dillingham, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. Herr Regenbogen's Concert is one of the most delightful musical sketches we ever read. The book is beautifully bound, and printed on the finest of tinted paper.

AN ARTIST'S TRIBUTE TO NILSSON.

A very pleasing incident of the close of the subscription season of Miss Nilsson's engagement at the Academy of Music, was the presentation by Mr. Alfred C. Clark, a well-known patron of music, to the popular *prima donna*, of a beautiful design by John A. Howe, whose "Forest Hymn," "Death of the Flowers," and other illustrated works, have placed him in the foremost rank of American draughtsmen. On a gray ground of Crayon board is inscribed the name "Christine Nilsson," in elaborately ornamented text. Just below this is the name "Gretchen," inclosed in a golden wreath of laurel. On each side appear medallions, with quotations from the text of "Faust" in German characters. At the bottom of the design are the first lines of the hymn "Dies Irae," and interwoven through all these are branches of ivy, snowdrops, and lilies of the valley, drawn with that feeling and expression which Mr. Howe is so happy in imparting to subjects of this character. The work was intended as a tribute to Miss Nilsson's rendering of Marguerite, and the poetic mind and culture of the artist were well displayed in the delicacy and beauty of thought which characterize his treatment of the subject.—*Home Journal.*

PRESIDENT PORTER, of Yale College, gave the following advice to the students of that institution the other day: "Young men, you are the architects of your own fortunes. Rely upon your own strength of body and soul. Take for your star, self-reliance, faith, honesty and industry. Inscribe on your banner 'Luck is a fool, pluck is a hero.' Don't take too much advice—keep at your helm and steer your own ship, and remember that the great art of commanding is to take a fair share of the work. Don't practice too much humility. Think well of yourself. Strike out. Assume your own position. Put potatoes in your cart, over a rough road, and small ones go to the bottom. Rise above the envious and jealous. Fire above the mark you intend to hit. Energy, invincible determination, with a right motive, are the levers that move the world. Don't drink. Don't chew. Don't smoke. Don't deceive. Don't swear. Don't marry until you can support a wife. Be in earnest. Be self-reliant. Be generous. Be civil. Read the papers. Advertise your business. Make money, and do good with it. Love your God and fellow-man. Love truth and virtue. Love your country and obey its laws."

☞ At the wedding between Hon. Eugene Hale, M. C., and Miss Minnie Chandler, daughter of Senator Chandler, which was celebrated at Washington, lately, the bride wore a dress imported expressly from Paris for the occasion. The material was white silk, of the choicest texture; the train was trimmed with two deep flounces of duchesse lace; above was white satin; and across the front breadth, folds of satin, edged with deep fringe. The veil was illusion, fastened with orange blossoms, and was worn over the face during the entire evening. The bride carried a handsome bouquet. Her jewels were pearls.

☞ Mr. Porter, of Missouri, having completed a century without any prospect of dissolution, has concluded to rub out and begin over again. Accordingly, his gray hair is turning black, and he is cutting a third set of teeth at the early age of 101.

☞ A hen-pecked husband, who had married his wife because she was handsome, declared that "a thing of beauty is a jaw for ever."

☞ No man's spirit is very much hurt by doing his duty. On the contrary, one good action, one temptation resisted and overcome, one sacrifice of desire, of interest, purely for conscience sake, will prove a cordial for weak and low spirits beyond what either indulgence or diversion or company can do for them.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKET.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 1118 head, and sold at 7¼@8½c. 150 Cows brought $40@55 ⅌ head. Sheep—14,000 head were disposed of at 4@6¾c. ⅌ lb. 4136 Hogs sold at $6,50@7 ⅌ 100 lbs net.

RATES OF ADVERTISING.

Thirty cents a line for the first insertion.

Twenty cents for each additional insertion.

☞ Payment is required in advance.

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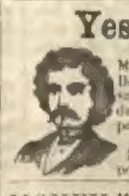

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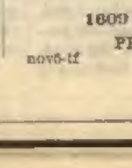

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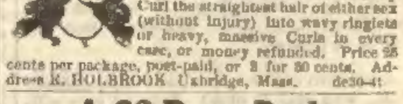

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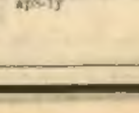

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WIT AND HUMOR.

MARK TWAIN'S ENIGMA.

I am composed of sixteen or seventeen letters.

My 16, 14, 3, 4, 6, 9, 15, is something or other, in a general way.
My 2, 11, 7, 14, is something else.
My 9, 6, 4, 10, 15, 11, is the other thing.
My 6, 16, 8, 14, 3, 2, 1, 11, is most anything.
My 6, 3, 9, 14, 7, 3, 1, 11, 5, 6, 16, 2, 13, is most anything else.
My 4, 2, 16, 9, is a good deal like some of the things referred to above, though in what respect it has baffled even me to determine.
My 9, 3, 8, 12, is—well, I suppose it *is*, although I cannot see why.

Now if anybody can cipher out that enigma he is an abler man than I am, notwithstanding I got it up myself. It would be a real favor if some one would try, however. I have figured at it, and worked at it, and sweated over it until I am disgusted, and I can make neither head nor tail of it. I thought it was rather neat at first, but I do not like it so well now that I can't find out the answer to it. It looks rather easy at a first glance, but you will notice that the further you get into it the more it widens out.

This is my first effort in the enigma line, and to speak the plain truth, I am considerably stunned at my own success. I do not seem to have just got the hang of this sort of thing; but I offer the entertaining little trifle to your readers for what it is worth; it may serve to amuse an idle year—and it cannot do much more harm—it cannot more than drive a man mad and make him massacre his relations.

THE TURTLE.

At the last school exhibition in a town in Maine, the following essay received the prize:

On the Turtle.—This animal is found most always in the water, but sometimes he leaves the water and then he comes on the land. The turtle cannot fly. If the turtle was the right kind of a bird he could fly; but if he was a goose-bird or an ostrich he could not fly. The turtle has four paws and mouth like the American eagle, which makes the British Lion and the unicorn tremble. The turtle has a shell, and sometimes folks put fire on his shell and then the turtle crawls out. But he never crawls back again. When the turtle crawls out of his shell he is very wet and sticky. There are two kinds of turtles: the mud-turtles and the other kind. We don't have any other kind in our pond. French and Irish people eat turtles and frogs, but I should not like to. I caught a turtle once, but it didn't do me any good, for I swopped it off for a jacknife and cut my fingers. Father said it was a judgment, but I thought it was a knife. I don't know much about turtles, but I blow for old Alexis.

Yours respectfully,
Lucius Tewksbury Fay.

A SECOND BYRON.

A poet's love is finely illustrated in these lines:

I stood upon the ocean's briny shore,
And with a fragile reed I wrote
Upon the sand—
"Agnes, I love thee!"
The mad waves rolled by and blotted out
The fair impression.
Frail weed! Cruel wave! Treacherous sand!
I'll trust ye no more:
But with a giant hand I'll pluck
From Norway's frozen shore
Her tallest pine, and dip its top
Into the crater of Vesuvius,
And upon the high and burnished Heavens
I'll write—
"Agnes! I love thee!"
And I would like to see any
Dog-goned wave wash that out.

"S'CAT."

A pretty good story is told of a citizen of Elizabeth, N. J., who went to the cars on Thanksgiving day to see his daughter off. Having secured a seat for her, he left the car and went round to her window to say a parting word. While he was passing out the daughter left the seat to speak to a friend, and at the same time a prim-looking lady who occupied the seat with her moved up to the window. Unaware of the important changes inside, our venerable friend hastily put his face up to the window and hurriedly exclaimed: "One more kiss, sweet pet!"

In another instant the point of a blue cotton umbrella caught his seductive lips, accompanied by the passionate injunction: "S'cat, you gray-headed wretch!"

IMAGINATION.

Grace Greenwood writes from Denver:—"Nature did antelopes an ill turn originally, in affixing to them a mark by which they can be seen, and 'a head drawn on them' at a great distance. It renders them especially liable to attacks in the rear; which reminds me of a little story: A small Colorado boy, who had been out playing, ran into the house in a state of great excitement, saying that he had seen some antelopes in a gulch near by. At his entreaty his mother went out to look at them, but nothing of the kind was to be found. She became incredulous, and said at last: 'I don't believe you saw any antelopes; it must have been your imagination, my child.' To this the little mountaineer indignantly responded: 'Humph! I guess my imagination isn't white behind!'"

HOPS AND BEER.

An honest German used to boast that he could take a mug of beer at one swallow. Some of the boys, just to try him, dared him to do it one night, having first slyly put a defunct mouse in the mug. Hans down with the whole business at one swoop, and sat quietly wiping his lips.

"How did it go, uncle?" said the boys in a chorus.

"It vas goot," replied the old man. "But," he continued, as if he had just thought of it, "I dinks dar vas a tam pig hop in de pottom."

A country editor is thus painfully jubilant: "Oh, bud this is dice! How we love widder—add the beautiful sdow—the riggig of berry bells—the log leigles on the cordices—add, ax the pood so fidely eggzpressed id:

'The frood upod the widder pode,'

all cobbide to redder this, the widder season, the best charbig, lovely, add beandiful of all the seasods. Dode you thig so? Whad if wud hab a liddle cold id diz head, so that one's doze is stobbed up? You cand expect that this world will have dothing id dit but fud, cad you? Do, iddead!"

Mother Goose has got after the Chinese students for Yale, thus:

Thirty Heathen Chinese
Riding on a rail;
Thirty long-tailed freshmen
Coming down to Yale.
Should they read Confucius
Instead of morning prayers,
We'll take them by the hind legs
And throw them down stairs.

New York claims him now—the one hundred-and-thirteen-years-old man who voted for all the Presidents, saws wood, was the groom of Washington, body-servant of Jackson, coachman of Jefferson, and barber to Franklin. He walks twenty-two miles every morning before breakfast, has used rum and tobacco for eighty-five years, and never was sick a day in his life. His teeth are in the highest state of preservation, he can read agate type by moonlight, and can hear the lowest whisper at a distance of several miles, etc., etc.

JUANITA;

OR, MY ADVENTURES IN MEXICO.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

CHAPTER II.

THE ESCAPE.

I awoke with sore limbs and an aching head. My room was still dark—but I judged by the clattering of dishes in another part of the cave, that the morning was pretty well advanced, and that the brigands were partaking of breakfast. Ere long I heard footsteps approaching; my door was thrown open, and the ugly countenance of Gomez appeared.

"I have brought you something to eat," he said, placing a dish on the ground before me.

Although I knew myself to be in a dangerous situation, my appetite did not desert me. I attacked the provisions with a gusto that made the grim outlaw smile.

"You eat hearty, for a man that has but a short time to live," he observed.

"Are you a seer, my friend, with power to foretell any one's death?" I asked.

"Not at all—I only speak the opinion of all the men concerning you."

"Why not let me go free? You will gain nothing by my death."

"Well, it is not my business—but dead men tell no tales, you know."

"That is certainly true, noble Gomez. I wish you would tell this worthy captain of yours, that I desire a talk with him, if it pleases his highness to grant me an interview."

"I will tell him, and you may expect to see him before night," replied Gomez, gathering up the remains of the meal, and fastening the door securely as he went out.

The long hours dragged along slowly. It seemed to me that I had already passed an age in my gloomy prison. As I was pacing restlessly around the narrow room, inwardly cursing Mexico and everything therein, the door opened once more, and the robber chiftain entered, carrying a lamp in his hand.

"Well, senor," he said, "Gomez informed me that you desired an interview with me?"

"Yes; I wish to know why I am confined in such a place as this?"

"Why, senor, unless you are confined you will be very likely to make your escape," he answered, smiling.

"But why do you wish to detain me at all? What do you expect to gain by it?" I asked, excitedly.

"Simply this: when your friends hear of your captivity, I think they will be willing to pay a handsome sum—say a thousand dollars—for your release. Although an honest man, I am poor, and I cannot let an opportunity to make a little money pass by unimproved."

The captain leaned against the wall, and laughed boisterously at his own wit.

"Did I not tell you that I was not a native of Mexico—that I had no friends here?"

"True, you did tell me so—but I did not believe that little story. Your personal appearance proclaims you to be a Spaniard, and you speak the language as fluently as I. Unless I am much mistaken, you are the son of some wealthy gentleman, and he will have to pay a large ransom for you."

"You flatter me greatly; but still I declare to you, that I am a plain American, a citizen of New Orleans. I was travelling alone through your country when you waylaid me—and all the money I had I delivered into your hands."

"It is useless to talk any further," exclaimed the brigand, springing to his feet. "I tell you positively, that unless some one pays a liberal sum in your behalf, you will never leave this place alive!"

He shut the door angrily, and stalked away, leaving me to digest his words at my leisure.

The long, long hours passed away with nothing to break their monotony. I racked my brain for a long time, trying to devise some means of escape. At last I became weary of this fruitless employment, and throwing myself on my bed, I soon forgot my troubles in refreshing sleep.

When I awoke, I heard light footsteps approaching. I listened intently. The person, whoever it was, came to my door and stopped.

"Senor, are you awake?" called a soft voice that sent a strange thrill to my heart.

"Who is it?" I asked, springing hastily from my hard bed.

"It is I, senor, the captain's daughter, Juanita. Do you wish to be free?"

"Most certainly I do. But why do you ask such a question? Have you the power to liberate me?"

"I am going to try, at least," she answered in low, sweet tones.

I heard her fit the key in the lock, and the ponderous door swung open. The girl entered silently, and cautiously closed the door again. She placed the little lamp which she carried on the floor, drew a small stiletto from her bosom, and cut the cord which bound my wrists. I was a free man once more.

"Beautiful Juanita, why do you risk your life to save a stranger?" I asked, pressing my lips on her little hand.

"You are a brave and noble gentleman," she said, "and I could not bear to see you die like a dog. But if you wish to escape you must not delay, for I know not how soon the men may return. Come, I will guide you."

"Are the brigands gone on a plundering expedition?" I asked, hesitating.

"Yes, every one of them, except Gomez, and he is fast asleep under the influence of a drug which I administered. The two women are asleep also, so there is no danger of your being observed. Come, let us hasten."

"Answer me one question, gentle maiden. Do you like the life which you now lead? Would you not rather be among more congenial companions—people who lead pure and honorable lives?"

Juanita's cheeks flushed, and her bosom heaved tumultuously.

"God knows I would," she said. "I hate the life I am forced to lead, I hate the crime-stained beings by whom I am surrounded. But what can I do? My father, my only relative, is here; if I leave him, I will be cast alone on the strange, cruel world."

"Not so, Juanita! If you will leave this place and go with me, I swear to protect you by every means in my power. You are young and beautiful; do not waste your pure life in this sin-polluted den."

She gazed at me a moment as if to read my heart, and then covered her face with her hands.

"I know not what to do," she said brokenly. "Is it right for me to leave my father?"

"But is he your father? I am convinced that not a drop of his blood flows in your veins."

"I would to heaven you were right!" she murmured.

"Then come with me, Juanita," I pleaded. "You need not fear to trust me. I would rather die a thousand deaths than injure one who has risked so much to save my life."

"I will trust you, senor," she said at length. "I will go with you."

She picked up the lamp, gave me her hand, and led me cautiously along the narrow passage that led to the main room of the cave. Here Gomez was stretched out, fast asleep still, as was proved by his heavy breathing. Juanita approached him and slipped the key into his pocket.

"He will suspect nothing at first, if he does awake," she observed.

We stole noiselessly along the main entrance, and ere long arrived at the mouth of the cave. Here Juanita blew out the lamp which she carried, and we stepped forth into the cool, balmy air.

The night was well advanced. The moon was rising in the east. No sound broke the solemn stillness, save the occasional howl of a wild beast, or the screech of a night bird.

"Which way do you wish to go, senor?" asked Juanita.

"If we can find our way to the town of ——, we can probably procure a conveyance there to Vera Cruz. But I forget—I have no money to pay for a passage, so I will be forced to beg my way to Vera Cruz, where I may possibly find some friends from New Orleans, who will aid me in securing a passage home on a steamer."

"I have some jewels here, senor; they are valuable, and will more than pay all your expenses. Take them and sell them as soon as you get to the village."

"No, no, dear Juanita—at least not yet," I answered, touched by her generosity.

"Let us hurry forward, then—we may get beyond their reach ere the brigands discover our escape."

"Heaven grant it!" I murmured. "Disarmed as I am, I could do nothing in self-defence."

"Take this stiletto," said Juanita, drawing a glittering blade from her bosom. "If necessary, use it—in your defence and mine."

"I shall certainly do so, and surrender only when my life is gone," I answered.

We pressed on rapidly, taking the moon for a guide. The way was exceedingly rough, but Juanita's form was slender and active, and she bounded lightly over the numerous obstructions in our path. We travelled for two or three hours without pausing. At length the maiden began to show signs of fatigue, and I proposed resting awhile on a mossy rock before us. The gray light of dawn was appearing in the east.

"Are you very tired?" I asked, looking in my companion's beautiful eyes.

"Not very," she replied, reclining her head on her hand. "It is only a momentary fatigue."

As I looked at her slender, graceful form, and her pale, sorrowful, lovely face, my heart was strangely stirred. I longed to gather the innocent, friendless young creature to my heart, and shield her forever from the cruel world. I was already in love with the beautiful Mexican girl, who had saved my life, and who now trusted herself wholly in my hands. I resolved to make her my wife as soon as possible, if I could gain her consent.

CHAPTER III.

I FIND A WIFE, AND JUANITA FINDS A FATHER.

"Juanita," I said gently, "have you any friends or relatives in Mexico?"

"Not one that I am aware of in Mexico, or in all the world."

"Poor child! And where do you expect to make your home?"

"God alone knows. I have nowhere to go, unless I return to my guilty father's protection."

"But, Juanita, were I to offer you my home, my protection, my love, would you accept them—would you become my wife?"

She raised her head and gazed at me a moment, while the warm blood dyed her cheeks.

"I am a poor, friendless girl," she said, "my father, or the one I call father, is a robber and an outlaw. You are rich and noble; you shall not disgrace your good name by marrying one like me."

"Juanita, my sweet, ignorant child, I love you, I cannot be happy without you. If you love me in return you shall certainly be my wife."

"I know nothing about love," she murmured shyly, "but I think you are very good and very beautiful."

"That is enough," I said, throwing my arms around her. "If you always regard me as you do now we shall be very happy together."

I kissed her warm lips, and then released her trembling form.

A very hasty wooing, you will say. But love at first sight is the truest of all love.

"Come, my darling," I said, rising to my feet, "we must go on once more. Before us are life and liberty and happiness; behind us, imprisonment and death."

At this moment a dark-clad man appeared, picking his way cautiously around the base of a cliff towards us. He did not seem to be aware of our presence, and we drew back behind the rock on which we had been sitting, hoping he would pass by without seeing us. His face was covered with a mask, but there was something familiar in his bearing. When he was directly before me, he turned his head, and I saw a pair of fierce black eyes glittering through the holes in the mask. Unconsciously I grasped the stiletto in my hand.

"Ha, villain, you have escaped, have you?" said the stranger in hoarse, angry tones. "And the girl with you? By heaven, you shall die like a dog for your treachery."

He drew a knife from his belt, and made a frantic plunge at me. But I was too quick for him. I leaped to one side, gave a quick thrust, and buried the sharp stiletto in his bosom. He fell back with a deep groan. I saw that the wound was mortal. I raised his mask, and saw the features of the captain of the brigands.

"Oh, holy mother! it is my father," screamed Juanita, kneeling by his side, and supporting his head in her arms.

"No, Juanita, I am not your father," said the dying man.

"Who am I then? Who are my parents? Oh, man, you are dying now, and I beseech you to tell me all you know about them. Tell me, I implore you, and I will forgive you all the wrong you have done me, and pray for the peace of your soul."

The brigand seemed affected by this impassioned appeal. His dark face softened, and he seemed struggling for strength to speak.

"There is not much to tell," he said at length. "I will be brief as possible, for my time is short. For twenty years I have been a robber and an outlaw. I was driven to this life by circumstances over which I had no control—but of that I need not tell you. One evening, about fourteen years ago, I and a part of my band were on an expedition far to the east of this, on the road that leads to Vera Cruz. It does not matter now what took us so far from our usual haunts. While we were prowling along the road, concealed behind the trees, an elegant carriage approached. I ordered my men to attack the vehicle. The men on the outside of the carriage—there were three or four of them—fired upon us. We returned the compliment with interest, and the men were soon stretched lifeless in the road. I opened the carriage door, and saw a little girl, about three years old, weeping over the prostrate bodies of two women. They were both dead. One was a beautiful young lady—as I supposed, the mother of the child—the other was her negro servant. We searched their clothes, and found some money and a large amount of jewels; then we threw their bodies and those of the men over a precipice near by. I found a letter and miniature on the lady's person; I have kept them ever since, thinking they might some time be of some use. They are in here—" laying his hand on his breast—"take them out when I am dead. I took the little girl to our retreat, and raised her as my own child. She reminded me of my own murdered darling, and I loved her. Juanita, you are the child I adopted. You are good and pure—pray for my soul, for I—am—dying—"

The robber gave a convulsive gasp, and sank back—his earthly career was ended.

Juanita arose from her knees, wiping the tears from her eyes. I searched the dead man's clothes, and drew forth a worn and crumpled letter, enclosing a miniature portrait. I handed the letter to Juanita, and glanced at the letter. It was written in English, and the first words arrested my attention.

"New Orleans, November 22d, 18—.

"*My Darling Wife:*—Life seems unspeakably dreary in your absence. I am almost tempted to leave my business to take care of itself, and follow you immediately. I will come as soon as I possibly can. Kiss little Juanita for me many times. I have no time to write more. Adieu, till we meet at your father's sunny home.

"From your devoted husband,
"Philip Delmaine."

I stood for a moment after reading this letter almost paralyzed. Could it be possible that Philip Delmaine, my intimate and highly esteemed friend, was the father of this lovely girl, whom I had discovered by accident in a robber's cave? It seemed very strange; but I remembered that Delmaine had sometimes spoken to me about his beautiful Mexican wife, who had been murdered by brigands while on a visit to her father's home. I had never questioned him on the subject, as it was very painful to his bereaved heart.

"Will you let me see the miniature?" I said to Juanita.

She placed it in my hand. It was the portrait of a young and very handsome man. I easily recognized the features of my noble friend, though time and trouble had silvered his hair, and robbed his cheek of its bloom. I looked from the picture to Juanita's face, and saw a striking resemblance between them, although the maiden inherited the dark, languishing eyes of her Spanish mother.

I briefly explained to Juanita the contents of the letter, and informed her that her father was a wealthy merchant in New Orleans, and one of my best friends. Her soft cheeks flushed scarlet, and her bright, dark eyes filled with happy tears.

"Oh, I am so glad, for your sake as well as for my own!" she said.

"But you will not wish to marry me now, Juanita. I am no fitting match for the heiress of Philip Delmaine, the millionaire."

"Ah, Senor, but for you I should never have found my father—and I love you!" she murmured.

I took her in my arms and kissed her fondly. She withdrew from my embrace in a moment, exclaiming:

"Let us hasten on our journey, Senor, or we may again fall into the hands of the bandits. Oh, that I could fly like a bird across the sea, to the arms of my long-lost father!"

We hurried forward in the golden light of the morning sun, and soon emerged from the forest into a tolerable road. We were now near a small town, where I looked to find some easier means of travel than walking.

We had not proceeded far when we saw a horseman riding slowly towards us. There was something familiar in his appearance, and when I saw his face I uttered an involuntary exclamation.

"What is the matter?" asked Juanita. "Is it one of our enemies?"

"No—I don't know—remain here a moment while I speak to him," I said, hurrying forward.

The stranger eyed me curiously as I approached. At length his grave face relaxed into a smile.

"Clive Morton, as I live!" he exclaimed, springing from his horse and grasping my hand. "What the deuce do you mean by footing it here alone, wild boy—and who is that pretty Mexican girl yonder?"

"How is it that you are in Mexico also, Mr. Delmaine?" I answered. "I left you quietly at home in New Orleans. Why did you not start with me, if you thought of travelling?"

"I had no idea of it then. But an irresistible longing to visit the place where my wife and child were murdered came over me, and so I packed up and started at once."

"Did you ever see this letter, Mr. Delmaine?" I asked, handing him the faded note.

He took the sheet from my hand, while his face grew deathly pale.

"My God, Morton, where did you get this? It is the last letter I wrote to my poor wife, ere I followed her here, and found that she and my child had been cruelly murdered, and all traces of them destroyed."

"Your child was not murdered, Mr. Delmaine," I answered.

"What? She was not murdered, do you say? How do you know this? Does she still live? Oh, my friend, if you know anything about my child, I implore you to tell me at once!"

"Your daughter lives, and stands before you," I said, pointing to Juanita.

I will not attempt to describe the meeting between father and daughter. After mourning his child as dead for fourteen years, Mr. Delmaine's joy upon finding her alive and well was unbounded.

As all of his wife's near relatives were dead or scattered in other countries, Mr. Delmaine did not remain long in Mexico. Of our homeward journey I need not speak; we arrived safely at New Orleans in due time. Mr. Delmaine secured the best of teachers, to give his daughter an education befitting a lady in her position. Two years after this she became my wife, and, as a fairy tale would say, we "lived happily ever afterward."

YE INFANT PRODIGY.

Maggie—"Why is your hair so gray, mamma?"
Mamma—"Well, because you're such a naughty child sometimes."
Maggie—"What a naughty child *you* must have been! Poor grandma's hair's *quite white!*"

Answers to Correspondents.

Additions to Clubs.—A correspondent asks "If additions can be made to clubs at the same rate." Yes.

To Contributors.—All manuscripts sent to us should have the price marked upon them if any is desired. Writers of no literary reputation should be satisfied at first if a good field is afforded them to display their talents and gain a name. We do not guarantee the safe return of manuscript, but endeavor to return it safely when desired, and when the requisite stamps are sent. Articles may be good of their kind, and not be suitable for our purposes. Experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their articles prompt attention.

O. K., (Philada.,) writes: "It is a common saying that the darkest part of the night is just before dawn. Is it so? and, if it is so, why? I should think the darkest part of the night would be midnight." Not necessarily so. The sunlight has as little effect upon the earth an hour or two after sunset or before dawn as at midnight. We are inclined to think, however, that the above is, like many other common sayings, not proven. It has never been subjected to the test of scientific investigation, and the general fancy does not make fact. People usually sleep through the central portions of the night, so it is probable that this idea has not arisen from a consideration of the gloom of successive portions of the night, but from the early morning having been considered by early risers particularly dark.

X. Y. Z., (Erie County, Pa.,) asks: "Whence originated the custom of burying the dead with their heads to the West?" The custom arises from an idea common to some Christians, to Mohammedans, and to other races possessing a holy city, or centre of faith; the idea, namely, that there is some peculiar virtue in religious ceremonies practised with the face turned toward the holy city. The Mohammedans are specially careful to face Mecca in their devotions. The Christian dead are buried with heads to the West with the idea that when rising in the resurrection they will face the East, or Jerusalem, the holy city. As Christian migrations have been principally westward, it is natural to look eastward for the origin of their faith, though really, to Americans, it is almost as near westward as eastward.

Willie W., (Siller, Pa.,) asks: "Would you please answer a little boy two questions in your Correspondents' column? Viz: Who is the present Viceroy of Egypt? And is Egypt subject to Turkey?" The present ruler is Ismael Pacha. He is a descendant of Mehemet Ali, the ruler who, in the early part of this century, by a massacre of the Mamelukes, brought the power to which Egypt had long been subjected to an end, and established his line firmly in the government. The country is still nominally subject to Turkey, but is governed with little deference to the authority of the Sultan. In 1867, by a firman of the Imperial Government, the direct succession of the present ruling line was established, with the title of Khedive or King.

O. R. N. (Dewitt, Iowa,) writes: "Should a woman contradict her man when she thinks he is wrong? Should a man, when his wife tells him anything, make light of it, and give her the slip?" Your questions are not very long, but they are broad enough to make up for any deficiency in length. The saying, "Circumstances alter cases," applies so strongly to the subject of your questions, that we must decline giving positive answers without knowing the particulars. There are cases in which a woman would do right to contradict her husband if she thought him wrong; and other cases in which contradiction would be very much out of place. So the husband might, in certain circumstances, be justified in acting as described in your second question. Silence is golden, you know; and particularly so where speech would cause discord.

Olonist (Baton Rouge, La.,) writes: "I would be glad if you would favor me with answers to a question. Please inform me of what is meant by the Paleolithic and the Neolithic ages. I know that the word Lithic has some reference to stone, but do not know what the application is. Has it any reference to the traditional golden and silver, and other ages, or has it other signification?" The two words given mean respectively the Old and the New Stone Age. They have no mythological reference, like the ages mentioned in your question, but refer to matters of hard fact. To give an idea of their use, I must explain some of the late archæological discoveries. Within the last ten or twenty years our acquaintance with the prehistoric condition of mankind has been greatly extended. Traces of human occupation have been found profusely in the most unexpected situations, showing the existence and condition of races in many places where no suspicion of human habitation had been before entertained. These remains consist of tools of various materials, as stone, copper, bronze, and iron, which have given rise to the names of the Stone, Copper, Bronze, and Iron Ages. But there is great difference in the finish of the stone tools, ranging from the very rude to the highly polished. This has caused a division into the Old and the New Stone Ages, depending on the degree of finish in these tools.

Benedick, (Winchester, West Virginia,) writes: "Will the Post be kind enough to inform me through its column of answers, what is meant by a Morganatic marriage? How does it differ from an ordinary marriage, and why is it sometimes called a left handed match? You will favor by giving this question your early attention." A Morganatic marriage is a marital arrangement only conceivable in connection with the radical differences of rank in European countries. It is a case in which the wife, on becoming married, does not take her husband's rank. Such a marriage is not considered legal according to the by-laws of court etiquette. It occurs when a man of high rank marries a wife of inferior station. The children of such a marriage do not inherit the title nor the rank of their father. It is called left-handed, because the man pledges his troth with the left instead of the right hand. The "hand-fasted" marriages of Scotland and Ireland were Morganatic, and the hand-fasted bride could be put away at the will of her husband for a fresh wife.

Sidney, (Winchester, West Virginia,) writes: "I noticed lately a statement of yours, answering a question in reference to the flight of pigeons, which appears to me strange. I know something of the speed of pigeons, and would be obliged if you could give me the authority for your statement, as such a speed as two hundred miles per hour appears to me quite impossible. Please give this your attention as early as possible, and you will oblige." The statement in question, as originally given in a New Jersey paper, was doubted by more sporting characters than our correspondent. A rush was made by the sporting world to Montclair, and a vain search made for the pigeon man. Further investigation found him in the person of a farmer's son, near Morristown, New Jersey. The statement, as we gave it in our answer, is said to be correct, and to be substantiated by entries made in the log book of the brigantine, George W. Chase, which sailed from New York for Galveston on the 8th of September last. The last bird, which died on its arrival, is said to have been a favorite with the sailors, and too highly fed. The same person is about making another voyage, in which he will let loose birds of the same breed at the distances of 1,000, 1,500, 2,000, 2,500, and 3,000 miles. Experts deny that a bird can sustain itself in continuous flight for over 1,500 miles. If the above project is carried out this will be tested. We can only account for the enormous speed attained, by supposing the birds to have availed themselves of currents of air, blowing in the direction of their flight.

J. B. S., (Florida,) writes: "What is a Limbo? I have seen the word somewhere, in Milton I think, but don't know what it means, and have heard the slang phrase 'in Limbo,' meaning prison. Please tell me its meaning." Limbo means a waste basket, a place for things which are too good to destroy and not good enough for use. It is applied metaphorically to school theology to designate a place for the reception of unbaptized infants and good heathens. They were considered not fit for heaven from not being baptized, and not deserving of future punishment from having committed no sufficient sin. Hence they were consigned to Limbo. Milton employed the word in its metaphorical sense in Paradise Lost.

Jones (Charleston, S. C.) writes: "Will the Post kindly post me concerning the life and labors of Charles Babbage, recently deceased, and give me some particulars of his efforts to invent a calculating machine, and what else he did of importance?" Charles Babbage was a man of undoubted genius, yet, though he worked energetically for some sixty years, he left nothing in a state of completion. As early as 1820 he was working to put his idea of a calculating machine into practice, and soon succeeded in enlisting government aid to his enterprise. Beginning with £700, the cost of the machine grew until it amounted to £17,000. At this point he unwisely brought forward the idea of an analytical engine, which was to perform the most wonderful labors of calculation, and to utterly surpass the "difference machine." The result of the negotiations for this new design was that the government withdrew all aid, and left him to his unassisted labors. He continued to work at this for the remainder of his life, but his plans, though theoretically correct, seem to have been practically impossible, and he has only left a mass of unfinished machinery instead of his projected thinking machine. He wrote several works, and numerous papers for scientific publications, all of them said to be excellent for their literary finish and the deep powers of thought displayed.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

CONUNDRUMS.

☞ Why is toothache like an unanswerable argument? Ans.—Because it makes people hold their jaw.

☞ Why is a vain young lady like a drunkard? Ans.—Because neither of them is satisfied with a moderate use of the glass.

☞ Why is a hungry boy looking at a pudding like a wild horse? Ans.—Because he would be all the better with a bit in his mouth.

☞ What word is always pronounced wrong? Ans. Wrong, of course.

☞ Why is a man who does not lose his temper like a schoolmaster? Ans.—Because he keeps cool (school).

☞ What ladies are best to go fishing with? Ans.—Annette and Caroline.

☞ Why is a great gambler like the Red Sea? Ans.—Because he's death on Faro.

☞ Why is a man attempting to lift an enormous weight like another swallowing a black draught? Ans.—Because he is testing his physical powers.

☞ If you wish to fatten a thin baby what should you do with it? Ans.—Throw it out of the window and it will come down plump.

☞ Why does the gallows assist in permanently enlightening man? Ans.—Because it elevates him, and then holds him in suspension.

☞ Why is the fish an eccentric animal? Ans.—Because he will have his (s) whim.

☞ Why are our sidewalks in winter like music? Ans.—If you do not C sharp, you will B flat.

RECEIPTS.

Fried Potatoes.—To be fried, the potatoes are cut either with a vegetable spoon in fillets, in slices with a scalloped knife, or with an ordinary one, or cut in pieces like carpets of oranges, or even in dice. When cut, drain and wipe them dry. This must be done quickly, so as not to allow the potatoes to turn reddish. Have a coarse towel ready, then turn the potatoes into a colander, and immediately turn them in the towel, shake them a little, and quickly drop them into hot fat. (See Frying.) When done, turn them into a colander, sprinkle salt on them, and serve hot. Bear in mind that fried potatoes must be eaten as hot as possible. Fry only one size at a time, as it takes three times as long to fry them when cut in pieces as when sliced or cut in fillets.

To Fat them Light or Swelled.—When fried, turn them into a colander, and have the fat over a brisk fire; leave the potatoes in the colander only about half a minute, then put them back in the very hot fat, stir for about a minute, and put them again in the colander, salt them, and serve hot. If the fat is very hot when dropped into it the second time, they will certainly swell; there is no other way known to do it. It is as easily done, as it is simple. Potatoes cut in fillets and fried are sometimes called *a la Parisienne*; when cut in slices, or with a vegetable spoon, they are called *a la Provençale*.

Sunderlands.—Warm a quart of rich milk, and cut up in it half a pound of the best fresh butter to soften in the milk, but not to oil. Beat eight eggs till very light and thick, and then stir them gradually into the pan of milk and butter, in turn with eight large tablespoonfuls of sifted flour. Beat all very hard together, and then transfer the batter to white tea cups, slightly buttered, not filling them quite full. Set them immediately into a brisk oven, and bake them about twenty minutes, or till they are slightly browned, and have puffed up very light. As soon as they are cool enough to handle without burning your fingers, turn them out of the cups on a dish, cut a slit in the top of each, and taking a teaspoon, fill them quite full of any sort of jelly or marmalade; or, if more convenient, with ripe strawberries or raspberries, sweetened with powdered sugar, and mashed smoothly. When filled with fruit, close the slit neatly with your fingers; and on the top of each lay a large strawberry or raspberry, having first dredged the sunderland with sugar.

Cream Cakes.—Are made in the above manner, but baked in patty-pans. When baked, take them out, cut a slit in the side of each; and having prepared an ample quantity of rich boiled custard, made with yolk of egg, and highly flavored (*after it has boiled,*) with lemon, orange, vanilla, rose-water or peach-water, fill the cakes full of the custard, closing the opening well by pinching it together. Sift powdered sugar over them, and send them to table on a large china dish.—*Hot.*